

WILLIAM THORNBOROUGH,

T H E

BENEVOLENT QUIXOTE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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V O L. IV.

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There, to the sympathetic heart  
Life's best delights belong ;  
To mitigate the mourner's smart,  
To guard the weak from wrong.  
Ye sons of luxury, be wise ;  
Know, happiness for ever flies  
The cold and solitary breast ;  
Then let the social instinct glow,  
And learn to feel another's woe,  
And in his joy be blest.

BEATTIE.

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L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON,  
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

M.DCC.XCI.



*Greenough Fund*

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THE  
BENEVOLENT QUIXOTE.

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C H A P. I.

WHEN Mr. Conway and our hero were about half way to Dunstable, they were overtaken by Mr. Harrison, who, galloping up to them, desired he might accompany them as far as their road lay the same way. They consented, and telling him N—— was the place of their destination, he replied he was very glad of it, as he should have

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B

the

the pleasure of attending them as far as B——.

When they arrived at Dunstable, and alighted at the inn, Mr. Conway enquired if his servant was there: the waiter answered in the affirmative, but that he was just carried to bed, and a surgeon attending him, for some violent bruises he had got in fighting.

“With whom, pray, has he been fighting?” demanded his master.

“With another servant, sir, who came here yesterday in a phaeton.”

“That must be mine,” cried our hero. “Order the fellow in.”

Poor

Poor Philip entered the room with his head bound up ; but when he saw his master, his joy was so unbounded, that all Mr. Thornborough's intended reproofs were converted into gratitude ; and he asked him, in the mildest tone, what could induce him to fight with a stranger.

" God bless your honour," cried the man, " I am so glad to see you alive and well, that I am out of my wits almost."

" I believe you are quite," replied our hero, " by your exclamation : I have been in no danger of any kind. What do you mean ? and why have you fought ?"

" I will tell your honour the whole truth," cried the man eagerly. " I came here

B 2

yesterday

yesterday to wait for you; but, some how or other, my mind misgave me about your going away across the country; and somehow I did not know but there might be a something the matter, that I were ignorant of; and so this morning comes 'squire Conway's servant, with his horse all in a foam, to wait, as he said, for his master. So as we were drinking together, I asked him what made him come in such a hurry: and he told me, but as a great secret, the young 'squire had been fighting with one of the greatest villains upon earth; and that he thought he had killed him, so went off himself, leaving him, Samuel, to see to his wounds, and then meet him here. So he said he was come to tell his master that his wounds were not mortal, though very dangerous.

Upon

Upon this I asked him who this villain was; and when he said Mr. Thornborough, I thought I could have killed him too. I told him 'twas a lie, and I'd prove it; that Mr. Thornborough was my master, and one of the best gentlemen in the kingdom; and that, if he died, Mr. Conway should be hanged: and so, sir, to cut a long story short, we had a regular boxing match, and I got the victory; though to be sure I am well drubbed myself."

Our hero smiled at this curious harangue, and then asked how he could be so simple as to suppose he was killed, when he had left him only the day before.

B 3

"Why,

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“ Why, sir,” replied he, “ I did not know when or where this duel happened ; so I could not tell but it might be true : however, thank God, I now see it is a lie.”

Mr. Harrison then, at their request, explained the circumstances to him, whilst our hero and his friend went up to see Samuel, whom they found indeed in a miserable plight. His master told him he deserved the punishment he met with, for his imprudence and folly ; first in revealing to a stranger what ought to have been an absolute secret ; and next in traducing a character of which he knew nothing, except what had escaped from him in the height of rage and resentment, and which consequently

frequently ought neither to have been depended on or repeated.

The poor fellow replied, he was now very sensible of his fault, and sorry for it. Mr. Conway then told him the wounded man's real name was Godfrey, to prevent any future blunders; and that he was going to N—— with the gentleman now present, who was Mr. Thornborough: and then bidding him take care of himself, told him, when he was able, to go to his seat in Buckinghamshire, and remain there till he heard from him.

The next morning, our hero having previously offered Wentworth a place in his phaeton, they set off with Mr. Harison on horseback, and attended by his

servant and Philip. They left this gentleman at B—, and proceeding to N—, alighted at the inn; and, sending a message to Mr. Atkins, learned Godfrey was better, though still very weak and low. After taking some refreshment, they went to the house, and, enquiring for Mrs. Atkins, were shewn into the parlour, and she came down. Mr. Conway's person she instantly recollected; but our hero was to her a stranger. Disregarding however his presence, she expressed herself with much violence on the conduct of the former, and wondered how he had the assurance to come there again, after almost killing so good a young gentleman. Here Mr. Thornborough interrupted her—

“ When

“When you know all the circumstances, madam, you must acquit Mr. Conway. At present we wish to see your patient: but lest he should, in his weak state, be too much surprised at my appearance, be so good as to inform him that Mr. Thornborough desires to have a short conversation with him.”

“Mr. Thornborough!” exclaimed Mrs. Atkins, with much satisfaction in her countenance; “bless my soul, I am very glad of it. I suppose, sir, you are his brother, or some ways akin to him. I do assure you I wanted to send to his relations, but he never would let me: but indeed, sir, he has wanted no care we could take.”

“I believe you, indeed, madam,” returned our hero: and, much pleased with the openness of her manner, he thought it would be best to inform her at once of her mistake; and continued—“Permit me, madam, to ask (nor think I am prompted by impertinent curiosity), on what footing is the gentleman in your family, and what pretensions has he made? Your candid answer to this enquiry will oblige me; and in return I will give you such information, as, though probably it will not please you, yet is what you ought to know.”

Mrs. Atkins coloured, and replied,  
 “I am sure, sir, if you are his relation, you have a right to hear all I can tell you. He saw my niece at an assembly  
 at

at B——, when he was a courting miss Wilding, and he fell in love with her: and as soon as t'other match was broke off, he came here: and my husband, to be sure, made no opposition, because he thought it would be a fine thing for Nancy, hearing a very good character of the gentleman. But so far I must take upon me to say, Nancy will have a very good fortune of her own, so there is n't such a great disproportion between them."

"I am, indeed," returned our hero, "truly concerned to be under the necessity of dissipating the golden dreams you have formed, and of destroying your good opinion of a man who is utterly unworthy of it, who has deceived

you with respect to his fortune ; as he is not worth a shilling in the world."

"I beg your pardon," cried Mrs. Atkins, nodding her head with an air of sagacity ; "that won't do ; I know a trick worth two of that. My husband is n't such a fool : he wrote about it into Berkshire, and heard that it was all true."

Here Mr. Conway, whose patience was exhausted, interrupted her hastily—  
 "And I beg your pardon, madam, but you are in a mistake : the person I wounded, and who is now in your house, is an impostor : this is the real Mr. Thornborough, whose name he has infamously assumed ; and that was the cause of our  
 duel :

duel: and I fancy, madam, if you will introduce us, he will not deny the charge."

This assurance was so convincing a proof of the reality of this assertion, that Mrs. Atkins could no longer refuse her belief. She turned pale, and exclaimed, "Oh! my poor Nancy!"

Our hero was himself affected: he took her hand, and requesting her to be composed, said, "Consider, my dear madam, how much better it is this discovery should take place now, than when your niece had thrown herself and her fortune away upon so practised a deceiver: he has injured me already, I fear, beyond the power of atonement; but

but as it was partly my own fault, I must abide by the consequences : it shall however be my earnest endeavour that no one else suffers by his art in the same manner."

"To be sure," cried Mrs. Atkins, hardly able to speak, "he is a villain indeed : but, unless you wish to kill him quite, pray, sir, do not insist upon seeing him to-day; he is so very ill, that any increase of fever might be fatal to him, the doctor says : and surely to find out he is discovered, and all his schemes knocked on the head as it were, must be very bad for him just now ; and, ill as he has used us, I don't wish for his death, but that he may live and repent."

The

The gentlemen were both charmed with the mild spirit of forgiveness she displayed in her present conduct; and our hero replied :

“ I should be unworthy of those blessings which fortune has conferred on me, if I did not follow so noble, so worthy an example. Let the same care be continued in every respect, and I will be answerable for every other expence, as well as those which yourself and Mr. Atkins have incurred; and we will wait your leisure : when you have broke the affair to him in part, let us know. But do not suffer your partiality to go so far as to continue miss Webster as his attendant; she may be already too much attached to him : it must be your endeavour

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### THE BENEVOLENT QUIXOTE :

your to wean her from it; as I again repeat, his want of fortune is the slightest objection that can be made to him; but his want of principle nothing can atone for."

They now took leave, seeing she was greatly distressed, and returned to the inn.

Mrs. Atkins waited impatiently for her husband's return, to impart the matter to him, and hear what he advised; but to keep it from miss Webster in the mean time, was impossible: she found from her aunt's agitation something had happened; and urged her so strenuously to let her know, that she could not refuse.

Nancy

Nancy at first treated it as an idle tale ; but when convinced of the truth, she wept excessively : but having naturally a strong mind, after having given vent to her emotions, she started up, threw her arms about her aunt's neck, and exclaimed, " Thank God I am not his wife." Then falling on her knees, she confessed he had used so many entreaties to persuade her to elope with him to Scotland, that she had at last consented ; and the day was fixed, when the duel put it out of their power to accomplish the design.

" I am now," cried she, " convinced of what I have often heard, that young women should never listen to those proposals which require concealment from  
their

their more experienced friends; and his insisting on this measure is a stronger proof than any that he is an impostor. What an escape I have had!

Mrs. Atkins rejoiced to see her so composed: and her husband not returning that night as she expected, the next morning her female curiosity could no longer be resisted; she visited her patient, and finding him much better after a refreshing sleep, and perfectly free from fever, determined to make some trial.

“I am glad,” said she, “to see you so pure well to-day, sir; and the more so as I wrote to your friends, and expect some of them either to-day or to-mor-

row;

row; and shall be proud for them to find you so hearty."

"You wrote to my friends!" cried he, wildly. "Good Heavens, you have undone me." As he spoke, his countenance betrayed the most violent agitation, which was enough to convince her of the truth; and now having gone so far, she knew not how to recede, and therefore went on.

"Why, to be sure, fir, 'twas but a disagreeable sort of an affair to have you lying here, and, as it were, dying, and none of your own friends about you. However, this won't be the case any longer, for two gentlemen at the King's Arms have sent to say they are come."

He

He started up in bed, and with a furious aspect exclaimed, "But I will not see any gentlemen. What do you mean, pray, by behaving so directly contrary to my commands?"

"Why, I'll tell you, sir, what I mean, if you will be quiet, and not make yourself ill."—At this moment the door opened, the surgeon entered, who had been by our hero and his friend previously consulted, and acquainted with the circumstances, and had given his permission for the discovery, alleging the wound was almost healed, and the fever quite gone, though the fears and humanity of Mrs. Atkins had prevented her from allowing it; and approaching the bed, said,

said, in a low voice, "Here are two gentlemen, of the names of Conway and Thornborough, who desire to see you." And *they* following immediately, were at the bed-side before he could make any answer.

The poor wretch averted his eyes from the latter, and hiding his face in the pillow, said, in a faint voice, "Forgive me, and let me die in peace."

"I should not have thought of dying indeed," replied the surgeon. "Come, sir, hold up your head like a man: you are in no danger."

"Godfrey," said our hero, "fear  
not

not my reproaches at this time. I am not come to alarm you; be assured of my forgiveness, if that will in any degree contribute to the composure of your mind. I call upon you only to resign the name you have so unjustly kept, and to clear my friend, before proper witnesses, from any ill consequences that may ensue from the duel; since you well know, had you not appeared in a character to which you have no right, the quarrel could never have happened."

Godfrey, who had more art than effrontery in his disposition, and was now weakened by illness, could not support the mildness of this address, but burst into tears.

"I am,"

"I am," said he, "indeed a complete wretch to have ever deceived so much goodness: but, in the present instance, though I have used your name, it was not designed to your prejudice, but merely to make my own fortune, by securing the hand of miss Webster."

"And is it," cried Mr. Thornborough, more warmly, "no crime to deceive an innocent young woman, to trample on all the laws of hospitality, and to make an offer of marriage in the name of another, which, in your own, would have been rejected with scorn?"

"I see it now," replied Godfrey, faintly, "in the light you represent it; but

but for that I am sufficiently punished, by the total destruction of my hopes.— But how, sir, shall I atone to you for my ingratitude?”

“Alas!” replied he, with a deep sigh, “I know not how, indeed: but the business which is now of most importance is, to clear Mr. Conway from all the consequences, which, should you relapse, might draw him into an unpleasant situation, by confessing yourself the aggressor.”

“That,” returned he, “I will do instantly.” Then, in the presence of Mr. Humphreys, the surgeon, and Mr. Atkins (who being only just come in, had received a hint of the truth from his

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wife,

wife, and had a few moments before entered the chamber, to learn more of the affair), he made a clear and concise avowal of the facts, which, whilst it criminated himself in the highest degree, entirely acquitted Mr. Conway.

Having very much exhausted himself by this confession, which affected him particularly, from the painful sensations it excited of shame and regret, they all went down stairs, after cautioning him to take care of his health; and our hero and his friend, promising to call the next morning, took leave of the Atkinfes for the present; unwilling, by their stay, to add to the confusion and distress which evidently reigned in the family.

On their return to the King's Arms, they sat down to consider what plan was next to be pursued. "As for me," cried Mr. Conway, "my mind is so wholly deranged by the late events which have befallen me, that I find I require not merely amusement, but exertion, to prevent my falling into that state of apathy so destructive to our happiness, and so improper to be given way to on every account. As you cannot so well manage what I am going to propose, leave it to me to accomplish the scheme, if you approve it. I have heard you declare, you would give any thing in the world to be released from your entanglement with miss Wilding. What if we make up a match between her and Godfrey?"

"Ah,"

“ Ah,” cried Mr. Thornborough,  
“ would to Heaven it were possible.”

“ Leave to me the execution,” added  
his friend : “ give me but your con-  
sent ; tell me how far I may command  
your fortune ; and, if I know any thing  
of the characters of either, you shall  
have the certificate of their marriage in  
less than six weeks.”

“ Shall I, indeed ?” returned our  
hero, with a smile. “ Why you are a  
perfect Machiavel. Use my fortune as  
you please ; I know I may depend on  
your honour and on your discretion :  
and trust me, if five or six thousand  
pounds could release me from my pro-  
mise with a clear conscience, I should  
think it was well bestowed.”

“ I flatter myself,” said the other, “ I shall get you off for less than that : the contrivance will amuse me. In the mean time pursue your tour. To-morrow I will sound Godfrey, and you shall know the result of our conference : the termination of my plan you shall hear by letter ; for as you cannot yourself so conveniently treat with miss Wilding in person, I take it upon me to be your deputy on this occasion, and recommend it to you to follow your intention of an excursion.”

Mr. Thornborough joyfully acceded to this proposal, and promised to follow his advice.

## C H A P. II.

WHEN Godfrey was left to his own reflections, however severely he felt the disappointment of his hopes, he was yet relieved from the apprehensions of a discovery which had long tormented him, by all suspense being at an end. His only hope now was to evade his creditors, if possible; but this he knew not how to accomplish. His heart was too selfish to feel any repugnance for the distress in which he had involved miss Webster, and love had been in this instance wholly out of the question: his interest was concerned; but Charlotte Wilding was

the only woman for whom he had ever felt any thing at all resembling that passion : and having enough of the stoic in his composition to rejoice that it was no worse, he comforted himself by reflecting he might have been killed, or so wounded as to render his continuing in the army an impossibility, which was now by no means the case ; and soon composed himself into a quiet sleep, from which he awoke the next day, greatly refreshed and amended.

About one o'clock Mr. Conway called, and was instantly admitted to his chamber. After some introductory discourse, "Forgive me," said he, "if I mention circumstances you probably do not wish should be known ; but you are  
yet

yet to learn, that, amongst the other ill consequences Mr. Thornborough has been involved in from bearing your name, he was arrested for some hundred pounds. Now, sir, as you are so deeply in debt, what plan of life do you mean to pursue, when your recovery releases you from this confinement?"

"Upon my word sir," returned Godfrey, "I am at a loss to answer you; I have yet fixed on nothing: but at all events I fear I must sell my commission to pay my debts; and must then—starve I believe."

"Not absolutely that, I hope: but tell me, if you can, to what may your debts amount?"

Godfrey then informed him, as nearly as he could guess; and Mr. Conway finding, though considerable, they were yet far within the sum his friend had mentioned, thus continued :

“ Hear what I have to propose : your present prospects are gloomy enough ; but if you will take my advice, they shall brighten. Pay your addressee to miss Wilding : she knows your character, you know hers ; so there will be no deception on either side : and when you are married, depend on my word, Mr. Thornborough will pay all your debts, provided, however, you have given me a just account of them ; and will get your commission exchanged for one upon full pay, in a regiment that is now ordered

ed to the West-Indies; and give you, besides, a handsome sum to set out with. This proposal I should think must meet your approbation; it is a provision for life, and the station such as, with his assistance, may prove an advantageous one. His fortune can afford to pay for this whim; as I really believe he will be very glad when you are both married, and out of the kingdom; as he will then have little chance of meeting with either, a circumstance that must be unpleasant, as, pardon me, he can never see you without reviving very disagreeable ideas and recollections, which, for the sake of all parties, had better be obliterated; and in this case absence may do much."

"Upon my word, sir," returned God-

C 5

frey,

frey, "you have opened a pretty scheme, could it be accomplished : but how shall I persuade miss Wilding to accept my hand, when you, sir, must know we have both followed the same trade; and, though much disappointed, she has not yet lost all hopes of success, as I have, and will therefore be more unwilling to enter into an engagement of this kind?"

"Two fortune-hunters," replied Mr. Conway, "have been often trapped into a marriage with each other; but their engaging voluntarily is, I believe, an unprecedented thing. Yet you will remember, that profession is always followed secretly; as when the lady or gentleman avows their occupation, they have little chance of success: and this is the case  
with

with miss Wilding. Mr. Harrison is gone to B——, full of the story, which he has only just learned, and means to make public; and this will, I think, ensure Letitia the contempt she deserves; and, thus driven to desperation, she will joyfully embrace any opportunity that may offer, to secure her from continued mortification; and under another name, and in a new place, she may again enter society with a character unimpeached; I mean only for sincerity, however, and a few such trifles, which you will not regard; for against her virtue I never heard slander itself say a word."

"That," returned Mr. Godfrey with a sigh, "is a reason to be sure. Well, I see no alternative; but we shall be as

miserable a couple as ever entered the lists of matrimony ; we know one another so well, and are so much alike."

"That," cried Mr. Conway laughing, "is the reason most people give for expecting to be happy : but take your choice ; only remember you must have one chain, or a thousand perhaps."

"Oh, indeed I do not hesitate, sir," answered Godfrey ; "and be so good as to acquaint Mr. Thornborough, with my best respects, that I consider myself particularly indebted to him for his lenity, and will gladly accept his proposals."

Mr. Conway then took leave, and, calling at the parlour door, had the  
satisfaction

satisfaction of finding the family tolerably composed. Miss Webster was present, and by a few well-timed compliments, gallant speeches, and real truths, he reconciled her to her disappointment; as what he said had much more effect than all the solid arguments used by her uncle and aunt.

When he returned to his friend, he delighted him by a minute recital of what had passed, and received his earnest thanks for the part he had taken, and felt a relief to his spirits, from the hope, which now arose strongly in his bosom, of being at length released from his promise by Letitia's marriage. He gladly agreed to the terms proposed, and consented to remain with Mr. Conway at

N—,

N—, till Godfrey's perfect recovery permitted them to set off for B—.

In the mean time, to prevent the hours from hanging heavily on their hands, as there was no society in the town that could possibly afford them any amusement, they devoted their time to excursions round the country ; and as the leisure, and almost solitude, in which they lived, gave them an opportunity of discovering the virtues of each other, they formed a perfect and sincere friendship.

Wentworth Conway was warm, high spirited, animated in his pursuits, and generous almost to thoughtlessness ; but  
violent

violent in his resentments, and proud, though not insolent.

William Thornborough was equally generous, but high spirited without pride, and animated without violence. Wentworth would open his purse to a beggar; but he knew not how to condescend to the feelings of an inferior in any way that interfered with his time, or engaged his attention. But to William the distresses of his fellow creatures were always a tax on his humanity; which could no more resist the opportunity of extricating them from difficulties, if by any exertions he could do it, than of relieving their more immediate wants, by bestowing whatever they required: this had sometimes drawn him into awkward and un-

pleasant situations; but he was always rewarded by the consciousness of his motive, and in general by his success eventually considered.

Mr. Godfrey in a few weeks recovered so perfectly, that they thought they might now begin their operations; and our hero, after paying all the expences that had attended his illness, and made the Atkinfes a handsome and genteel present, to recompense them in some degree for their trouble and humanity, set out on his intended tour.

## CHAP.

## C H A P. III.

DURING this period every thing at B—— had conspired to forward the execution of their plan. Mr. Harrifon's good humour had ever rendered him a welcome guest in every family; and, as on his return he visited every creature he knew, and told at every house he entered the story of the strange metamorphosis of Godfrey into Thornborough, and all the relative circumstances, it soon became as public as could be wished; and those, whom the pride of the Wildings had made their irreconcilable enemies, rejoiced at a discovery so mortifying to them.

Charlotte,

Charlotte, apprehensive of this, had left B——, and was gone to visit a friend at Bath; therefore happily escaped witnessing the contempt which fell on them so deservedly.

The miss Willises took the first opportunity of calling on Letitia, and, with an affected disbelief, told her the report of the town; and, whilst they relied implicitly on its truth, pretended to laugh at the absurdity of the story.

Letitia's confusion, however, would at all events have betrayed her. She stammered out, there was really a something of a mistake, she fancied, between the gentlemen; but that she supposed they

they had quarrelled, and now threw the blame on her.

But these endeavours were ineffectual: the story gained universal credit, and she was generally shunned; and she suffered so much from the behaviour of the world, that she was on the point of despair; and so thoroughly convinced of the destruction of all her hopes, that she would gladly have taken refuge in a nunnery, had nunneries for protestants been permitted. The longer she lived in this state of seclusion (for she could not venture out, from the fear of experiencing new mortifications), the more dejected she grew, when a visit from the first cause of her misfortunes roused her from torpidity into fury. She accused

cused him as the author of all her wrongs; and in bitter invectives and pointed sarcasms gave a vent to the rage that had so long rankled in her bosom. And this had an happy effect; she grew calmer at last, and Mr. Godfrey thought it was now his turn to be heard.

“Remember, madam,” said he, “I only suggested the scheme to you, and the probability of its success: that I was mistaken, has been as much my loss as yours: and had your pride been too delicate, or your conscience too tender, to have followed the line I pointed out, I imagine you would have declined it at once; and that you did not, cannot be laid to my charge. All the reparation I  
can

can now make I will, by offering you my hand."

"Your hand!" interrupted she, indignantly; "what, that I may turn beggar, or carry your knapsack?"

"It shall be just as you please," returned he, with equal scorn; "but remember, in England you are done for. Who will marry a professed female fortune-hunter? And you have not money enough to set up your trade in any other place. Hear my proposals; I make them for the last time. A friend will pay my debts, and get my commission exchanged for one in a regiment very soon to embark for the West-Indies. In another climate, and as Mrs. Godfrey, you may,

may, perhaps, meet with that respect you have for ever forfeited here.”

“Respect, indeed!” cried she: “the wife of a poor lieutenant! Very probable: the name of Godfrey, then, must act as a charm.”

“I do not know but it must,” replied he, “to insure you respect any where. However, you know what you have to trust to; and it is my real opinion, if you will not be my wife, you never will be a wife at all. You may consider till to-morrow, but no longer; as I must then settle my plan, for the regiment is to embark in a few weeks; and if you marry me at all, it must be within ten days.”

Letitia

Letitia made no reply to this curious address; and he took leave, after informing her he should call the following morning for her final determination. This may appear a novel method of courtship: but it must be remembered, they both knew each other perfectly; and Godfrey was as well acquainted with her character, as with the world; and was very sensible an affectation of love, which she must be conscious he could not feel, would have a very contrary effect from what might be supposed; for that she would, perhaps, make it a plea for keeping him in uncertainty, till he should have lost the opportunity of exchanging his commission; and therefore, like a man driving a bargain for a house, thought the most probable way of obtaining

taining it was by indifference; and it had the desired effect.

Miss Wilding, when he was gone, began to consider seriously what he had said; and after ruminating upon the advantages of a change of condition (her present situation considered), she at last determined to accept him, if her father and mother would give their consent. At breakfast she informed them of Mr. Godfrey's offer, which they very warmly approved. Mr. Wilding rejoiced in the opportunity of settling his daughter, though in a way so much inferior to what he once hoped for; yet, allowing for the opinion the world now had of her conduct, it was beyond his expectations. Letitia left her father to settle with Mr. Godfrey,

Godfrey, and retired with her mother, to begin the necessary preparations.

When the gentlemen met, the preliminaries were soon adjusted. Old Wilding promised to give his daughter a few hundreds, and leave her a few more upon his will : and Godfrey agreed this should be settled upon her, as well as half whatever Mr. Thornborough should present him with. And with this the father was perfectly satisfied.

When miss Wilding made her appearance, the lover thought proper to assume some degree of tenderness ; and Letitia endeavoured to behave with propriety : but on both sides there was so

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taining it was by indifference; and it had the desired effect.

Miss Wilding, when he was gone, began to consider seriously what he had said; and after ruminating upon the advantages of a change of condition (her present situation considered), she at last determined to accept him, if her father and mother would give their consent. At breakfast she informed them of Mr. Godfrey's offer, which they very warmly approved. Mr. Wilding rejoiced in the opportunity of settling his daughter, though in a way so much inferior to what he once hoped for; yet, allowing for the opinion the world now had of her conduct, it was beyond his expectations. Letitia left her father to settle with Mr. Godfrey,

Godfrey, and retired with her mother, to begin the necessary preparations.

When the gentlemen met, the preliminaries were soon adjusted. Old Wilding promised to give his daughter a few hundreds, and leave her a few more upon his will : and Godfrey agreed this should be settled upon her, as well as half whatever Mr. Thornborough should present him with. And with this the father was perfectly satisfied.

When miss Wilding made her appearance, the lover thought proper to assume some degree of tenderness ; and Letitia endeavoured to behave with propriety : but on both sides there was so

much evident constraint, that an indifferent spectator must have been amused.

When Mr. Conway heard all these particulars, he was pleased with the success of their enterprise; and instantly wrote to Mr. Thornborough, who was at Carlisle, an account of their proceedings; and then set about collecting his debts: but this took not up much of his time, as Godfrey's principal creditors, when they first heard of his addressing miss Wilding some months before, had thrown their affairs into the hands of Mr. Clayton, and impowered him to receive the money. The commission also was exchanged; and Mr. Conway, understanding his intention of settling half upon Letitia, presented him, at our hero's particular

ticular request, with one thousand pounds, from an idea, that, if Godfrey's extravagance should again reduce them, the five hundred pounds, added to her own, would secure her from absolute want. This being settled, Mr. Conway attended them to church, gave the lady away with infinite satisfaction, as certain of the pleasure his friend would receive from the knowledge of being perfectly at liberty; and then saw them set off in a post-chaise for London.

During the time of his stay at B——, he cultivated the acquaintance of Mr. Nesbit, to whom our hero introduced him by letter; and in his society found an agreeable and pleasant relief from the tedious task of looking over accounts and

paying bills. Mr. Nesbit was thoroughly rejoiced at the discovery; and declared he always thought our hero's spirit and elegance deserved the estate better than the other; and he now hoped time might bring about an event for which he was very anxious.

"Does your friend," said he to Mr. Conway, "ever mention the name of Barrymore with any particular degree of approbation?"

"Yes," cried Conway, "indeed does he; and I believe thinks of no other." He then confessed, convinced he might do it without hazarding our hero's displeasure, his sincere attachment to Sophia,

phia, and the disappointments and vexations he had experienced.

“Ay,” cried the old gentleman, “I thought Heaven had formed them for each other; their souls seemed in unison; and many a time have I lamented that the injustice of fortune might counteract the intentions of nature.” He then sent a very affectionate and congratulatory message to our hero, which Mr. Conway promised faithfully to deliver.

In the mean time, Charlotte Wilding, ignorant of all that passed at B——, was spending her time very pleasantly among her friends at Bath: nor was the arrival of Mr. Littleton in England a trifling addition to her happiness. He set out

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immediately on the receipt of his friend's letter ; and first going into Berkshire, took possession of his living ; and then, hearing miss Wilding was at Bath, followed her to that place ; and there, by the persuasions of her friends, who thought they had been engaged long enough, she consented, after having written to her father for his approbation, to give him her hand ; and they set off for Berkshire, to wait the arrival of his patron. And having, at his first visit, found the parsonage house in tolerable repair, he ordered the workmen to make the few alterations and improvements it required in the ornamental way, which were soon completed ; and they found it quite ready for their reception. He would not, therefore, avail himself of our  
hero's

hero's offer, with respect to his residence at the Abbey.

All the neighbouring families paid their compliments to the bride; but among none of them did she meet with minds so congenial to her own, as at Beech Park, between which and Thornborough Abbey the parsonage was situated. Miss Fitzwilliam paid her so much attention, and had so much real merit, it was impossible not to return her esteem with an equal degree of regard; and they soon became on the most intimate footing. They often joined in the wish that Mr. Thornborough's attachment to Miss Barrymore might be crowned with success, for their own sakes as well as his; as Mrs. Littleton knew by experience, and

miss Fitzwilliam imagined from report, she must prove an invaluable acquisition to their society. Mr. Fitzwilliam had not forgotten his promise to our hero; but had yet no opportunity of fulfilling it, as the Barrymores were still in France.

When Mr. Harrison left B——, which was some time before Mr. Conway, he went immediately to Southill Grove, and made his proposals in form, was accepted, and, as soon as the necessary preparations were made, the ceremony was performed; and after staying to receive the visits of the neighbourhood, the bride and bridegroom set out for his estate in Staffordshire, accompanied by miss Deloraine, for whom Mrs. Harrison had

had long entertained a sincere regard ; and had obtained her promise, and Mrs. Medway's consent, that she should remain with her for several months.

Mr. Conway having settled every thing for his friend, returned to his own seat in Buckinghamshire, and endeavoured, by amusement and society, to banish from his mind the unpleasant events which had lately occurred. He sent a woman, on whose care he could depend, into Berkshire, with a letter from Mr. Thornborough to his housekeeper, desiring her to resign her charge : and when the little girl arrived at Conway Manor, her striking resemblance, even at that early age, to her beautiful but unprincipled mother, struck Wentworth with a mixed sensa-

tion of tenderness and dread : the latter, excited by a fear lest, with Arabella's features, she should inherit her sentiments. He received her with great affection; and, having seen her properly placed at a village about five miles from the Manor, found real pleasure and satisfaction in his daily visits, which he never, but on very particular occasions, omitted.

## C H A P. IV.

IT is now time to return to our hero, who during all these transactions had been travelling in the north. The moment he received from his friend an assurance of Letitia's marriage, he quitted Carlisle, which had hitherto been his head quarters, and set out on his journey towards the south. His mind, released from half its embarrassments, was now only anxious for miss Barrymore's arrival in England with a disengaged heart, and as well disposed to regard him with favour as he flattered himself she once was.

From Carlisle he went into West-  
D 6 morland,

morland, and, after visiting the lakes, intended to return into Berkshire through the counties on the coast; when driving one day along the banks of a narrow river, he heard some cries of distress, and stopping the phaeton, perceived they came from some ragged children on the other side. He called to them to enquire the cause, and was informed by the eldest of the party, a boy about twelve years old, that George Fleming had fallen into the river, and would be drowned. Ever alive to the impulse of humanity, without an instant's delay he sprang from the phaeton, threw off his coat, and asking whereabouts the accident had happened, the lad pointed out the place, and he plunged into the water, and in a few moments again reached

ed the bank, with a child apparently about eight years of age, in his arms, but retaining no signs of life. Observing some smoke ascending from amidst a clump of trees at a little distance, he placed the lad in the phaeton in the posture he thought most likely to promote his recovery, and drove on towards the only appearance of an habitation he could discern, first enquiring of the children where he lived, and who were his parents.

“He is parson Fleming’s eldest son,” replied one of them, “and a lives a mile this side of the water, athwart that green meadow, and a matter of four from where you be, over the bridge up along yonder.”

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As the poor little fellow's life was still doubtful, he charged them to take no notice (a very unnecessary caution, for they were too much afraid of his father's anger, having been repeatedly ordered never to take him with them, when they went to play near the river); and then proceeded, guided by the smoke, to a farm-house enveloped in a thick wood. Here he received every possible assistance in his humane endeavours, which in a short time began to be successful; and the little fellow was almost recovered, when the surgeon arrived, who had been instantly sent for from the nearest town; and who, after a few more applications, pronounced him out of danger, but not well enough to be removed home that night.

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The evening was drawing to a close; and our hero, having seen him properly and comfortably accommodated, and being much pleased with the attention paid him by the farmer's wife, a very good sort of woman, now began to consider the feelings of his parents; and, taking one of the farmer's men for a guide, set out, late as it was, for the parsonage at Middleford. He arrived at the village a little after sun-set, and enquiring for Mr. Fleming, was directed to a small but neat looking house, with casement windows, and a green before the door, where there were several children at play. A little girl here told him her papa was gone out, but her mamma was at home, and desired he would follow her. He did, but was not a little distressed at the confusion

fusion that appeared in Mrs. Fleming's countenance on his abrupt entrance. She was sitting with a cradle by her side, mending an old black coat by the very dim light of a small candle in an iron candlestick. The room was paved with stone, and from its furniture he concluded it was the kitchen, and from her appearance that she was a servant: but her voice, her words, her manner, when she answered his first address, which fortunately however was not such a one as to give her reason to guess at his mistake, soon convinced him of his error: but this conviction had such an effect on his benevolent and feeling heart, that he forgot the purpose for which he came, and considered only her apparent mortification at being seen by a stranger in  
 so

so humiliating a situation. He paused, hesitated, but at length, in answer to her enquiries, said he wished to see Mr. Fleming. She replied with a sigh, he would be at home in a few minutes.

A mutual silence now succeeded, which he ventured to break by asking her how old the little boy was who stood by her knee, every now and then casting a fearful look at the strange gentleman, yet half inclined to be sociable. She replied, just turned of three, and was again silent.

Fearful of alarming her in her present situation, which was very apparent, and supposing she had no reason for apprehension, he would not speak of the child

child till Mr. Fleming's return : but little William pulling her by the apron, cried out, "Mamma, where's George?" At this question she threw down her work, and burst into tears.

Our hero taking advantage of this opening, "Come here, my little man," said he, "and I will tell you where George is." Mrs. Fleming looked at him with an incredulous anxiety, and cried, "Do you, sir, really know?"

"Yes, madam," returned he; "I left him at farmer Dickson's."

"Oh, thank God, thank God," cried she, in a voice almost inarticulate. "But  
is

is he alive? is he well? How came he so far off?"

Before he had time to answer her questions, Mr. Fleming entered the house, his countenance wild with agony, and as pale as death. "Order my horse," cried he, in a voice trembling with horror. "Oh then," exclaimed she, wringing her hands, "something has happened; and you, sir," turning to our hero, "have deceived me."

"No, madam, on my honour I have not; I left the child not only alive, but out of danger."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the half frantic father, "is he preserved? Was he not

not drowned indeed? How, which way shall I be sure of it?"

"I can," returned our hero, "have no interest in deceiving you: I took him myself out of the water, and he is perfectly recovered."

The surprise of this joyful intelligence was too much for the father: he burst into tears; and when a little composed, observing the situation of his wife, he ran to her, and pouring out some wine, made her drink it. Then, conscious of his inattention to his guest, he seized his hand, begged him to forgive his strange behaviour; but that, now his recollection was restored, he would thank, as he ought, the preserver of his child.

Mr.

Mr. Thornborough then, to stop the effusions of their gratitude, related the circumstances; and concluded by saying, when he found Mrs. Fleming, as he thought, wholly ignorant, he was unwilling to alarm her feelings, by confessing the child had been in danger. He then requested to hear how they had been informed of it.

“As soon as we had dined,” answered Mr. Fleming, “George asked my leave to go out with some children that live in the village: and as I had always charged them never to play near the river, I consented; nor was at all alarmed at his absence, till it grew near dark. I then went out to enquire if he had been heard of; but not learning any thing satisfactory,

tisfactory, I began to be seriously uneasy. However, I came home, and telling Lucy not to be frightened, said I was going up to Mr. Edwards's, to enquire for George, who might perhaps be there. She saw what I wished to conceal, and caught my fears, though she disowned them. When I left her, I met on the road a little boy, who I knew was with my son; and threatening him with my horse-whip, if he did not tell the truth, he fell on his knees and confessed, that, as they were at play, George ran beyond the place he intended, and not being able to stop himself, had fallen into the river. He added, a gentleman on the opposite side had plunged in instantly, and taken him out, and had carried him to Dickson's farm; but he believed he was quite drowned, he had  
been

been so long under water. Half distracted, I came home for my horse, endeavouring, but in vain, to conceal my knowledge of the truth from Mrs. Fleming. And thus, sir, but for the blessing of Heaven, and your happy intervention, I might by one stroke have lost almost all that is dear to me."

When they were all a little composed, Mr. Fleming declaring he would not go to rest till he had seen his boy, our hero declined their offer of making him up a bed, and determined to accompany him. On their arrival they found the child growing every moment better; and the next day Mr. Thornborough restored the darling son to his anxious mother. Her feelings were too acute to suffer her to  
speak :

speak : but Mr. Fleming again said every thing a grateful heart could dictate. They entreated him to favour them with his company for that day at least, and he consented ; having experienced during his whole tour, and in the most beautiful views he had met with of inanimate nature, no sensations half so delightful as those which spring from the consciousness of having saved a fellow-creature from death, and restored to its parents a darling child. Nor could the loudest popular applause have given to his soul such real satisfaction, as the simple effusions of gratitude and joy which flowed from their uncorrupted hearts.

## CHAP. V.

WHILST Mrs. Fleming was busied in her domestic arrangements, her husband accompanied our hero to the top of a hill, which rose at some little distance from the village, and commanded a beautiful and extensive prospect. During their walk, the conversation turned on the beauty of the country ; and our hero commended his situation as delightful.

“ Yes, sir,” returned Mr. Fleming, with a sigh, “ it is, indeed, delightful to the eye ; but there the advantage ends.

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E

Accustomed

Accustomed as I was, in the early part of my life, to all the comforts of refined society, I now bitterly lament my total seclusion from the world: nor can the consciousness that I drew myself into this situation by my own folly lessen my regrets; on the contrary, it heightens them."

"But surely," replied Mr. Thornborough, "there is some neighbourhood: I have within a few miles passed several gentlemen's houses and seats, though there are none immediately in the village where you live. The distance may exclude Mrs. Fleming; but gentlemen may——"

"Alas, sir," interrupted Mr. Fleming,

ming, "you judge of the world from the benevolence of your own heart. Though my profession may entitle me to rank as a gentleman, my poverty (for I may as well own what you must discover) forbids my associating with the families you speak of. How would a thread-bare parson find admittance at their tables? Besides, I could not bear the expence of visiting, nor could I make a return; and my spirit recoils at the idea of lying under an obligation for a dinner. As to receiving company at home, you must have seen enough to convince you of the impossibility; yet the necessity to which I am reduced would be trifling, compared to my own feelings."

"But how, Mr. Fleming!—I beg  
E 2                      pardon,

pardon, if I appear impertinent : “ was this situation the result of your own choice ? ”

“ The consequence of my folly, I said : that my folly was voluntary, I confess ; yet, impelled by the ardour of youth, and an ungovernable passion, I foresaw not what those consequences would be. I was bred up, sir, by an uncle, who placed me at Oxford, with the promise of a good living, and the expectation of a tolerable estate.

“ During my residence there, I was carried by a fellow student to visit his family. They were all pleasant and cheerful ; and, as they lived not many miles from the university, I repeated my  
visits,

visits, till the beauty of Lucy Fennel captivated my affections to such a degree, I could think of nothing else. Her father, knowing, I believe, my expectations, gave me every encouragement: and Lucy was herself so far from being indifferent to me, that she consented to elope. We were married; and applying to my uncle for forgiveness, he absolutely refused, and commanded me never to appear before him again, as he was determined not to see me. His anger was the more excited from my marrying so young, and into a family not the most respectable in the world. Mr. Fennel made a ridiculous plea of his daughter's conduct, not to give us a six-pence; and thus, with only seventy pounds in my pocket (fifty of which my uncle had

sent me, as his last present), I took orders, and, through the interest of a college acquaintance, obtained this curacy; which, scanty as it was at first, now, since the increase of my family, scarcely affords us a decent provision. I am still tenderly attached to my wife, and I have every reason to believe she is so to me; yet there are times when we both regret our situation: but her family cares, which are numerous, leave her little time for reflection. This is not the case with me; nor have nine years of solitude and penury reconciled me to my situation. Lucy is amiable; and I declare I would not exchange her for any other woman in the world, let her fortune be what it would: yet I cannot but be sensible we have  
drawn

drawn each other into difficulties, which, by a more prudent conduct, we might have avoided. You, sir, are a young man; and your appearance bespeaks you a man of fortune; therefore my caution is probably unnecessary: but suffer me to say, love in a cottage is the most dangerous idea a young mind can entertain. New to the world, and unacquainted with its distresses, we fancy in the bosom of mutual affection they will either be wholly lost, or scarcely felt: but it is an error as destructive as fallacious. Every misfortune is doubled by the participation of those we love, when embittered by the reflection of having involved them in our misery. When I see my poor girl struggling with poverty she never felt till she knew me, and toiling for

my comfort, till the exertion becomes too much for her health and spirits, how like a guilty wretch do I feel, and how gladly would I recall the past! Yet I do not pretend to feel all this wholly on her account; I have my own share of distress. I see a rising family, who can have no prospect but labour and servitude. I am treated with neglect, sometimes with contempt, by those whom I could formerly have regarded as my equals. The conversation of the villagers disgusts me; and when I fly to my books for relief, I am haunted by reflections I can neither banish nor subdue. Yet do not, sir, I beseech you, imagine I suffer either my wife or my neighbours to perceive my discontent: to the former it would be cruel, and to the latter

ter useless to complain. I am philosopher enough to conceal, though I cannot subdue, my griefs; and I really feel the utmost gratitude to, and affection for, my parishioners. From unbending myself to them, I have obtained their esteem; and whenever any particular distress, arising from illness among the children, or any other cause, has disturbed us, they have united to comfort, to soothe, and to assist me: nor should I now have troubled you with my complaints, but, in my long banishment from polished society, I have not once met with a person who could understand my peculiar sources of uneasiness: and the relief the mind experiences from unburthening itself to a humane heart, is a pleasure so

great, and to me so new, that I dare venture to hope you will pardon me."

"My dear sir," replied Mr. Thornborough, "your apology is unnecessary: your confidence has extremely obliged me; and I flatter myself it will be in my power to prove myself not unworthy of it. Your banishment, as you call it, is a very unjust one. I know the Fennel family perfectly well; and as you seem to be acquainted with the character they bear, you will not, I trust, be offended, if I give you a recital of my introduction to them, and its consequences." Here he related all the circumstances, with respect to them, which to the reader are already known; and then continued:

"Thus,

“Thus, sir, you see I owe them some services for the disadvantages I have apparently drawn on them; and what part of their family is so worthy attention and regard, as Mrs. Fleming? Do not refuse me the pleasure (observing he was going to interrupt him) of endeavouring to draw you from this solitude, and placing you in a situation you are well calculated to fill. I have, unless I deceive myself, some interest: but I will not say more on this subject, lest you should imagine I am like the man in Joseph Andrews.”

“Indeed, sir,” returned Mr. Fleming, warmly, “I can never think that. At the risque of your own life, you have already conferred a most inestimable

favour on me ; and I must lose my existence, when I lose the sensations of gratitude I now feel to Heaven and to you."

"Will you," continued ~~our~~ hero, "tell me your uncle's name, and where he resides?"

"With pleasure, sir: his name is Mellish, and he lives a few miles from Winchester."

The conversation now returned to the Fennels ; and Mr. Fleming appeared extremely amused by the account of our hero's visit. "We keep up," continued he, "very little correspondence: but by the last letters my wife received from her youngest brother, Samuel, the best of  
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the family, and the most like herself, we learn that Harry and his wife are very comfortably settled; and the former had taken possession of the place, which I now find it was your goodness procured for him."

Soon after this they arrived at the end of their walk; and, on their return, conversed on indifferent subjects. When our hero re-entered the little parsonage, he found, in his short absence, there had been a considerable alteration for the better, both in the appearance of the house and family. He was ushered into a small boarded apartment; the children were all dressed, and Mrs. Fleming herself appeared like another woman. Upon looking at her, to see if he could discover

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ver any trace of the Fennels in her countenance, he discerned the remains of beauty, lost not by age (for she was not more than nine and twenty), but by fatigue, illness, and anxiety; and a sweetness and modesty in her eyes, which proved she had once been superior to her sister, whose features had no mark of either. There was something, not of polish, but of genteel simplicity in her manners, very interesting; and her dress, though not fashionable, was yet so different from what it had been the evening before, that it added not a little to her improvement.

Mr. Fleming was the gentleman and the scholar; but had been soured by affliction. He was however at this time  
 remarkably

remarkably cheerful ; and when, after dinner, Mrs. Fleming left them over their bottles of mead and currant wine, the best liquors their cellar produced, he declared he had not for many years passed so happy a day.

Our hero was much affected by this declaration, and secretly determined to provide for him, if it was in his power. Towards evening he took leave ; and little George following him to the gate, he shook him by the hand ; and slipping into it five guineas, begged he would accept of them, as a slight remembrance. Mr. Fleming was then at some distance, standing by his horse ; and the child, delighted, though scarcely sensible of their value, ran back with them to his mother, who

who was much struck by the delicacy with which this present was made. Nor was Mr. Fleming less charmed with this instance of attention, than he had been, through the whole day, with our hero's behaviour in every point; who, returning to Dickson's farm, and sleeping there that night, the following morning pursued his journey.

## C H A P. VI.

INSTEAD of travelling slowly through the western countries, as he had intended, our hero was now so anxious to complete his benevolent purpose, that he took the shortest road, and staid only when his horses were too much tired to go on. He was within twenty miles of London, when he observed a superb equipage drive into the inn where he was to dine. The arms informed him it was lord M——'s; and going to the window, he saw his lordship alight, and hand out a young lady, whose face however he could not see. He had been introduced

troduced to him at Mr. Conway's, to whom his lordship was a particular friend; and knowing Mr. Thornborough's interest in Berkshire, had paid him the utmost court.

Lord M—— was a peer of the realm: but his high station had not preserved him from meanness; nor was his dignity equalled by his virtue. He was a widower, his lady having died of a broken heart in the seventh year of their marriage, and her children were all settled in the world. After her death, disliking the idea of a second lasting engagement, he kept a variety of mistresses, by whom, as it may be supposed, he was cheated and jilted. Disgusted at length with the libertinism of their manners,  
and

and suffering considerably in his fortune from their extravagance, he resolved to marry and live quietly in the country. But this was a scheme not so easily effected : the virtuous abhorred his character, and the dissipated feared his rigour, till after many months spent in the search of a wife, he was introduced to a young lady, who had so many reasons for wishing to marry, that she overlooked the disparity of their years, and his reputed jealousy and ill-humour ; and having no principle herself, she could not reasonably object to his total want of it. The preliminaries were consequently soon adjusted, they had been married a fortnight, and were now on their way to his lordship's seat in the north.

Learning

Learning accidentally our hero was in the house, lord M— sent him a message, and he waited on him immediately. After the first compliments, he led him up to his lady, in whom, to his utter astonishment, he discovered the late miss Arabella Southill. Surprise for an instant chained his tongue; but when he recovered, he paid his congratulations with a tolerable grace, and then, with infinite presence of mind, turned to his lordship, and apologized, by saying, that having lately met that lady at her father's, and not having heard of her marriage, he could not conquer the surprise he felt at seeing in her lady M—.

This speech gave her ladyship time to conceal, though she could not conquer,

quer, her confusion, at thus unexpectedly meeting one to whom her whole conduct was known : but there was in his manner something of a pleasant frankness, that prevented the continuance of those fears which his appearance at first excited, lest he should betray her. This, however, was far from his intention ; he saw through the motive of her marriage, and judged she would be sufficiently punished by her union with lord M—, whose character was as well known to him as his person.

Willing to convince her she had no cause to dread him, he accepted his lordship's pressing invitation to dinner, and whilst they were at table made every polite enquiry after her family ; spoke  
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of her sister Harrison, and carefully avoided every topic that could renew in her mind the disagreeable memory of the circumstances attending their first acquaintance.

The conversation then turned on the Conways, in which she bore a part with as much effrontery as if the name had been till that moment a stranger to her; and this leading to politics, our hero expressed himself so warmly on the ministerial side, that lord M—, who was a complete courtier, was charmed, and wishing to secure his attachment to their cause, asked him if he had any friend in the clerical line he wished to oblige, as a living in his gift was just then vacant, and much at his service. Mr.

Thornborough

Thornborough instantly thought of Mr. Fleming; and mentioning the circumstances to his lordship, he approved of his choice, and said the presentation should be made out in his name. Lady M— exerted herself so earnestly in this affair, that our hero could scarcely avoid smiling, from an idea that she might suppose it would bind him to secrecy; and every thing relating to it being settled, lord and lady M— took leave, and proceeded on their journey.

Mr. Thornborough, much pleased at having so happily accomplished part of his plan without any trouble, sat down instantly to acquaint Mr. Fleming with his good fortune, desiring him to come as soon as possible, and take possession  
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of his living, which was in Wiltshire, and worth about two hundred a year. In this letter he inclosed a draught on his banker for a handsome sum, politely apologizing for this liberty, by saying, as the removal of a family was unavoidably attended with expence, he hoped Mr. Fleming would not refuse to consider that trifle as his own. Having sealed up this letter, he felt a strong impulse to send another of congratulations to his friend Conway; but being told his phaeton was ready, he had only time to write the following short billet :

“ I have just had a most extraordinary interview with lord and lady M—: the papers must have informed you the latter was Arabella Southill. You may suppose

suppose my introduction was not extremely pleasant to her : indeed her countenance testified as much apprehension as mine did astonishment ; but you may conclude nothing passed. I congratulate you on your final release, for such, I trust, you will esteem it ; and give me leave to add, you need not wish her more misery than she is doomed to experience. I know him well, and know him to be cruel, suspicious, and unfeeling. She will, if I mistake not, atone for all her past conduct ; and it is right she should. Dazzled by the glitter of a coronet, she has sacrificed every hope of peace. Yet, what peace could she feel, after having thrown away her own happiness, in giving you such a cause to reject her ? Once more let me entreat you to for-

get her as entirely as I believe she has forgotten you : let your pride, your reason support you ; and remember, my dear Conway, the advice of your faithful

WILLIAM THORNBOROUGH.

C H A P.

## C H A P. VII.

WHEN these letters were finished and sent away, our hero pursued his journey, and arrived at Winchester, without meeting with any adventure worth relating. He alighted at the George, and sent off his own servant, with a note to Mr. Mellish, - expressing a wish to see him on particular business, and that he would wait on him the following morning, at any hour he should choose to appoint. The servant soon returned with Mr. Mellish's compliments, and should be glad of his company at breakfast.

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With this invitation he resolved to comply, and arrived at the house a little before ten.

Mr. Mellish, who had been ill with the gout, was not yet come down stairs; but his lady received our hero with a great degree of formal and old fashioned politeness. She was very far advanced in life, but had an apparent mildness in her manner, which promised him success with her at least; though he had been the whole morning haunted by the recollection how unfortunate he had been in some of his first adventures, and into what ridiculous situations they had drawn him, particularly those in which the Fennels had been any way concerned.

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Yet, though discouraged by these ideas, they did not prevent him from attempting to execute what he thought right; and he now addressed Mrs. Mellish on the subject which brought him to Winchester, related to her his accidental meeting with her nephew, his situation, the prudent conduct both of him and his wife, and their present improved prospects, from the living lord M—— had given him, modestly concealing the part he had taken in it himself. “And now, my dear madam,” added he, “as you know my motives, I trust you will forgive my intrusion. Fearful of his uncle’s continued resentment, he probably would not have ventured to solicit a reconciliation; which, however, after so many years,

Mr. Mellish may be less unwilling to grant than he supposes : and as he is now in a manner coming into this neighbourhood, I wished, though, believe me, entirely unknown to him, to give you a hint how much it would increase the pleasure he must feel at his independance, to be again upon amicable terms with those friends, of whom he still speaks with the highest respect and esteem, and whom he acknowledges he justly offended by his indiscreet connection."

Here he paused ; and Mrs. Mellish, wiping her eyes, replied, " Indeed, sir, you are very good to take this trouble, and I earnestly hope your endeavours will not be thrown away ; but I dare

dare not answer for Mr. Mellish: though I can assure you, it has not been my fault that poor George has been so long estranged from us; and I will most warmly second you."

Our hero by this speech found her influence was but small, and judging from that of the character he had to deal with, determined to proceed accordingly. When Mr. Mellish made his appearance, and the first compliments had passed, "I waited on you, sir," said our hero, "to mention a relation of yours, who I fear has been long forgotten by you, but whom you will probably recollect by the name of Fleming. I have lately had the pleasure of seeing him, and have now that

of informing you he is appointed, through the interest of lord M——, to the living of —— in Wiltshire. I came to you, without acquainting him of my intention, to let you know of his removal, lest, should you have been inclined to forgive him, your ignorance of his leaving Middleford might have produced some unpleasant mistakes.”

The old gentleman's countenance, which had been very cloudy at the beginning of his speech, cleared up towards the conclusion. “Umph,” said he, taking off his spectacles: “lord M—, did you say? That was lucky to be sure: but how, pray, did he meet with him? George was a good lad once. Well, and he is coming hereabouts, is he? Ah, well,

well, I don't know, I can't say positively; but, perhaps, if he was to come here——why, fir, you know it is a long time since he married, though I was very angry then. Well, I say, if he thought it worth his while to come here and see me, I might try to forgive him. Eh, fir, what do you think?"

"I think," returned our hero, "it would make him perfectly happy to be admitted once more, to pay his respect and duty."

"Ay," cried Mrs. Mellish, who had impatiently watched his countenance, "pray do receive him, and let me write to tell him."

F 5

"What,

“What, indeed ! write to invite him !  
No, no, I’ll have no such doing, I promise you. If he comes, it shall be all of his own head.”

“But pray, sir,” added the old lady, addressing our hero, “do you suppose he will come, after having had so many applications refused ?”

Mr. Thornborough gave her a significant look, which she understood, and then replied, “Yes, madam, I do firmly believe he will ; though I again repeat, my visit is unknown to him.”

Mr. Mellish then made many enquiries, during the time of breakfast, of his family, conduct, and situation ; to all  
which

which the answers, though never deviating from the truth, contributed to melt the old man's heart, which was naturally of very tough materials.

When our hero took leave, the old lady followed him to the hall door; and there, in few but very expressive words, thanked him for his benevolent intention, and exulted in its success.

"May I," whispered she, as if afraid of being heard, "interpret your look at breakfast into a promise of letting him know yourself what he may expect?"

"You may indeed," returned our hero as softly; then wishing her a good

F 6

morning

morning aloud, he rode off delighted at his unexpected success; and the instant he returned to the George, always indefatigable in whatever he undertook, he sat down to inform Mr. Fleming of what had passed, and to advise him what steps to pursue. He then set out on his journey to Berkshire, and arrived at Thornborough Abbey in the evening. Late, however, as it was, Mr. Littleton was there to receive him; and they sat up almost half the night talking over past events, some of which afforded our hero much pain; but in general the recapitulation of his own conduct gave him that pleasure which is ever an attendant upon the consciousness of having

having acted for the best, and given up our own comfort and satisfaction for the advantage and happiness of others.

CHAP.

## C H A P. VIII.

THE next morning, after calling at the parsonage, and paying his compliments to Mrs. Littleton, our hero rode over to Beech Park, where he was received with unfeigned satisfaction by the whole family, and his friend Mr. Fitzwilliam in particular. After some general conversation, the latter desired he would go with him into the library; and when they were alone, "I have," said he, "some good news for you, but I must relate it methodically. Sir Philip Barrymore is dead; and his daughter, with her cousin Charles, very soon expected

pected in England. Your old acquaintance Mr. Barrymore, now sir Charles, has, since his death, redeemed Delafield, the house and estate mortgaged to sir Hamilton Erskine, and has taken possession. He was there for some weeks before I returned to Beech Park; and the instant I knew it, I hastened over, and said every thing I could in your favour, spoke of your attachment to his beautiful niece, and the deception you had been unhappily engaged in."

"You were very good indeed, my dear sir: but what said he?"

"Why, he said he had a very sincere regard for you, and a good opinion of you, which my account had strengthened;

ened; but that Sophy was her own mistress, and upon whomever her affections were placed, he should not oppose them. I then hinted I had heard of an attachment between miss Barrymore and his son: but he replied with the utmost frankness, that report was wholly without foundation. He said they had been almost bred up together, and had for each other a fraternal regard, which he hoped would never decrease, though it might preclude any other sentiment of affection. He promised me his interest, and gave me reason to believe the fair Sophia would be prevailed on to give you her hand without any difficulty. He is now gone to London, and only waits to meet his son and niece, in their way

way from Dover, and will then return hither with the whole family."

"You have, indeed, my dear sir," replied Mr. Thornborough, "been the best friend I ever had; and I hope I shall neither prove ungrateful for your kindness, nor undeserving of your esteem."

Here the conversation ceased; but as our hero spent the whole day at the Park, it was frequently renewed; and he was highly pleased with Caroline Fitzwilliam, for the earnest desire she expressed to see miss Barrymore, and the pleasure she expected from her society, when she was settled in the neighbourhood,

"Delafield,"

“Delafield,” said Mr. Thornborough,  
 “is six miles from you ; but I hope ——”

“To bring her nearer by three,” cried Mr. Fitzwilliam, finishing his speech ;  
 “and in this hope we all join. But, young man, when will you pay your compliments at Conway House ? There is a large party there, and a fine bustle they make. I shall ride over to-morrow on election business. Will you go ?”

“I thank you,” returned Mr. Thornborough, “but to-morrow I am particularly engaged : the next day, perhaps, I may. But it is a long way ; and, to confess the truth, I have no partiality for any of the family, but Wentworth, and he is in Buckinghamshire.

In

In the afternoon they were joined by the Littletons; and the entire harmony and confidence which subsisted among the party, rendered their society particularly pleasant to each other. Our hero was again all himself: animated by the hopes Mr. Fitzwilliam had inspired, he gave way to the natural cheerfulness of his disposition, which often drew from Mrs. Fitzwilliam, who had not seen him since the alteration of his character, exclamations of surprise and delight.

On the following morning he went to the attorney who had the care of his estate, and transacted all his business, to complete the execution of a deed he had before ordered to be prepared, to entitle miss Deloraine to the fortune he designed

signed to give up; and, when it was signed, he dispatched one of his own servants with that and a letter to her, at Mr. Harrison's in Staffordshire.

Returning to his own house, he passed by Delafield, and observing several workmen employed in alterations and repairs, it instantly occurred to him, that Thornborough Abbey, though at present wanting nothing material, was yet deficient in point of elegant and ornamental decorations; and turning his horse's head, he rode some miles out of his way to order a person to come to him that very afternoon, to consult about the improvements he designed. The idea of miss Barrymore's taste and elegance first inspired him with a wish  
of

of rendering the Abbey not contemptible in her eyes. Yet his heart sickened with the fear, that all this anxiety might be to no purpose, since her decision was as yet uncertain.

Thornborough Abbey was, as the name implied, a very ancient building, in the light gothic style of architecture: but whilst its outward appearance retained all the venerable grandeur for which it had been so many years remarkable, within it had all the comforts and all the conveniences of a modern house; and struck not with that gloomy awe, and those terrific sensations, which buildings of this kind are apt to inspire, and which however we may love to indulge for a few hours, whilst viewing the  
remains

remains of palaces or convents, tracing their antiquity, and pausing with religious dread and holy horror over the faint vestiges of their former magnificence, or seeking with fond enthusiasm the now valuable reliques of their superstition—become painful if constant, or, what is more probable, lose by degrees their effect upon common minds. For many insensible hearts regard with cold curiosity, or childish wonder, the venerable ruins of piles, once as much crowded as they are now deserted, nor consider

Where bats now rest their sable wings,  
 Th' impurpled feast was wont to flow,  
 And beauty danc'd in graceful rings,  
 And princes sat, where nettles grow.

Yet there are those, upon whose peculiar

enliar cast of mind and refined sentiments, the gloomy though stately mansions of "other years" impress a degree of melancholy which ends in habitual dejection: for there are few whose spirits are at once so lively and tranquil as to indulge at pleasure the wild effusions of romantic enthusiasm, and at pleasure turn their ideas upon gayer and brighter subjects.

Thornborough Abbey possessed every advantage that could be wished for: though not very far from the turnpike road, it was too distant to receive any inconvenience, and in the park and pleasure grounds there was every variety that wood and water can bestow; and the adjacent country presented a prospect

at

at once beautiful and enlivening. The intermixture of hills and valleys, villages, corn fields, meadows, gentlemen's seats, and farm-houses, with the Thames winding its way through this enchanting scene, contributed to excite in the beholder the warmest sensations of gratitude and delight; and impressed the strongest ideas of that peace, plenty and liberty, which, through the favour of Heaven, the inhabitants of this sea-girt isle so peculiarly enjoy.

Nor was the possessor of these blessings insensible of their value, or ungrateful to the Power who had bestowed them. His mind, at rest from all the cares which had so long tormented him, had now leisure to recollect the present and immediate

mediate calls upon his benevolence ; sensible, as some author elegantly expresses it, we can best prove our gratitude to Heaven by our charity to our fellow-creatures : and he instantly set about forming a large and extensive plan for the benefit of his poor neighbours, which a few months would enable him to put into execution ; and which, whilst it was free from any possibility of involving him in ridiculous or unpleasant situations (which his former romantic schemes, as had too often proved, were not), promised him a superior degree of satisfaction in their completion, as they were upon a more general and useful scale.

In meditating upon this, and over-  
Vol. IV. G looking

looking the improvements in his house ;  
in the society of his friends, and antici-  
pating the higher satisfaction he should  
enjoy when his beloved Sophia returned,  
a fortnight passed smoothly and rapidly  
away.

## C H A P. IX.

IT was now the latter end of September; and one bright morning, our hero recollecting his promise of spending a day with Mr. Conway, who had paid him an early visit on his return, ordered his horse, and rode to Conway House. He was first introduced to Mr. Conway, who taking his hand, shook it with all the warmth of extreme friendship; and then, bowing with all the politeness of a courtier, declared himself infinitely honoured by this visit.

“I wished, my good sir,” said he,

G 2

“to

“ to see you on a particular occasion; and must entreat you to pardon my not immediately leading you to Mrs. Conway, and my daughters, as I want to have a little private conversation with you.”

Mr. Thornborough, though much perplexed to guess what this could possibly be, yet desired him to continue.

“ You know, my dear sir, that I am well convinced your political principles are the same as my own, or I would not venture to make the request I am now going to urge. At the approaching election I am pretty sure of my own interest; but I have promised to endeavour to get in my friend colonel Moreland,

land, for the borough of D——, in conjunction with sir Edward Allendale. Now, as they have been accustomed to have a member on each side of the question, I am afraid it will be hard pushed, particularly as Mr. Fleetwood is a popular man.—Now, sir, I know your interest in that borough, among your tenants and tradespeople, is so great, that if you will but exert it in favour of Moreland, we shall be sure of success.”

“ My opinions,” returned our hero, with much spirit, “are decidedly in favour of the present ministry; I approve their plans, I applaud their conduct, and it is ever my firm intention to support them: therefore, sir, you may depend upon my

voting for the colonel. As to my interest, if my advice is asked upon the subject, I shall certainly give it in his favour; but how I can otherwise exert it I do not clearly see."

"Oh," cried Mr. Conway, "you can get him fifty votes if you choose; it is but threatening your tradespeople to leave them, if they will not vote as you please, and you may be sure of them all: I would do so, if I was not in parliament myself."

"Would you?" returned Mr. Thornborough, with an indignant calmness; "I am sorry for it: but give me leave to say my principles are different; nor would I influence a tenant or a dependant

dant by these violent measures, if the election rested only on a single vote, though the candidate were my own brother. According to my ideas, threats are as unjustifiable as bribes; and what becomes of the liberty of the nation, if a haughty and insolent man exerts the power given him for a better purpose, to oblige a poor creature, whose bread depends upon his acquiescence, to give a vote against his conscience, and too often to confirm it by a false oath? Where think you, sir, in this case, rests the sin of perjury? It falls not on the unresisting vassal, but on the tyrannic lord; and nothing should tempt me to load my conscience with so heavy a charge."

Mr. Conway, who was totally devoid

G 4

of

of all principle of this kind, could not have concealed the anger and contempt this speech excited, had he not long practised dissimulation; and now, veiling his real sentiments under the appearance of conviction, replied—"To be sure, Mr. Thornborough, you are perfectly right, and your opinion is as just as wise: but you make no allowance for the good that may arise from this method of proceeding, and thus counterbalance the evil. Consider, my dear friend, the good of your country; consider what infinite——"

"If," interrupted our hero, "the safety of my country depended upon my acting contrary to every idea of justice, honour, or humanity, I do not conceive, even  
 hen,

then, such measures could be justifiable. But, as it is, I hope, my dear sir, my country is in no danger from my not interfering in the present instance; and, believe me, I would to the utmost exert myself in any way that I could imagine useful, or that could be pointed out to me as such, if it accorded with my opinion of propriety."

Mr. Conway would not give up the argument, though our hero thought he had spoken decisively enough upon the subject to have concluded it. But the other still continued—

"And then, sir, you forget how the opposite party conduct themselves. Do

G 5

they

they not take every unfair advantage of us? And what chance have we of succeeding, if we follow not their example?"

"Would you, sir," returned Mr. Thornborough, gravely, "follow the example of a party you affect to despise? and would you not then justly deserve and incur the contempt such conduct merits? Ought we not, rather, by a fair and candid method of proceeding, to shew them how much we are above such meanness, and that we rest solely on the justice of our own cause?"

Mr. Conway was beginning a reply, when the last dinner-bell ringing put a period to their conversation, much to the satisfaction

satisfaction of our hero, whose mind was too delicate not to feel pain at being obliged to tell any person how totally he disapproved his principles, yet too candid not openly to avow his own sentiments.

In the dining parlour, besides the ladies of the family, he found miss Clementina Moleworth, a miss Leslie, Mr. Manningford, Mr. Tresilian, Mr. Daventry, and two or three other gentlemen who were strangers to him. A great many nothings passed on all sides during dinner: but, when the servants were withdrawn, our hero unfortunately revived the subject of the play, by asking if it had been performed, and how it went off.

Miss Conway, to whom this question was addressed, coloured, but made no answer. But Mr. Trefilian replied, with a laugh—"Why, sir, it went off so entirely, and so swift, that, 'like the baseless fabric of a vision, it leaves not a wreck behind.'"

"True," added Miss Conway, attempting to smile; "we found it was not practicable, and so gave it up, I think."

"The truth of this story, however," whispered Mr. Trefilian to our hero, when the rest of the company were too much engaged to hear him, "is, that Miss Conway has an admirer who is  
many

many years her senior; and who, hearing of the plan, and not approving theatrical exhibitions, wrote in one word, without standing upon compliments or ceremonies, 'Give up the play, or me; take your choice; if you act Almeria, you see me no more.' This was the substance of his letter, and I believe nearly the words. What the lady's determination would have been, I cannot say; but the father was so clearly on Mr. Ellison's side, that it admitted not a debate. However that may be, I believe miss Conway, who never loved her husband that is to be, is now so mortified and so angry, and despises so much his narrow and illiberal notions, as she terms them, that she is more indifferent to him than ever; though I fancy she  
has

has still sufficient attachment to his fortune, to make her, upon mature consideration, not sorry that she did not persist against his inclinations; but, I imagine, intends to revenge herself when she is a wife, and has it in her power."

"Poor man!" cried our hero, with a smile; "what a delightful chance of happiness will he have!"

"Ay," returned the other, "it is these little events which make me rejoice in being an old bachelor; and exclaim, with a modern poet,

'Whilst snugly I smile on myself and my cat,  
'The sharp notes of marriage are worse than the flat.'

The loud noise, occasioned by half the company's speaking at once, now ceased,

ceased, and put an end to their conversation; when the subject of it, drawing up her head, said, "I have been so often refused by Mr. Thornborough, that I know not how to condescend to ask another favour of him, or I would enquire if we might expect his assistance in a little concert we have formed for this evening."

"Whenever miss Conway," replied he, bowing, "honours me with a request it is in my power to comply with, I am always happy to accede to it."

"Then you will not return to-night, I hope," added Mrs. Conway; "for, if you do, your assistance will not be of much service to us, as we shall not begin till it is dark."

"Certainly

“Certainly I will not, madam, if it is your wish I should stay.”

“Oh, to be sure,” added Mr. Conway, who had struggled to hide his chagrin with some success—“the days are now too short to suffer distant visitors to return till the next morning at least. But you, Mr. Thornborough, I hope, will not limit yours.”

Our hero bowed ; and the ladies soon after retired to the drawing room.

CHAP.

## C H A P. X.

WHEN the tea table was removed, the company adjourned to the music room. The miss Conways were mistresses of this delightful art, and played with wonderful execution: Charlotte also sung with great skill, and had a surprising compass of voice. But both their singing and playing were so consonant to their general manners, so utterly without feeling or expression, that our hero could scarcely attend sufficiently to the instrument he had chosen, for reflecting on the superiority of miss Barrymore, whose delicacy of mind, elegance  
of

of taste, and softness of manners, were never more conspicuous than in her choice of airs, and the style in which she executed them.

Just as they had played a few bars of a lesson by a fashionable Italian composer, a servant, entering the room, whispered something to his master; who replied, "Oh yes, to be sure: shew them into the parlour, and I will come in a minute."

When the piece was finished, the footman re-entered, and said the lady was so ill, the housekeeper did not know what to do, and the gentleman had left her to go for a physician.

"What

"What is all this?" said Mrs. Conway.

"Oh," cried her daughter, "nothing to us, I dare say: let us go on. Mr. Thornborough, shall we have one of Vanhall's?"

"Yes, madam, if you please, his forty-second."

Mrs. Conway again interfered; and the servant replied—"Just now, madam, a chaise drove up to the gate, and a gentleman getting out rang the bell, and desired we would permit him to bring in a lady for a few minutes, and give her some drops; for he thought she was dying. I brought the message to  
my

my master ; and then, by his order, shewed them into the parlour : the gentleman is gone to fetch a physician, and Mrs. Lawrence is frightened to death."

"Pooh!" cried miss Conway, "the woman is an idiot ; besides, what good can we do, if we go ? Pray, Thomas, had they no servant with them ?"

"No, madam."

"Did they come in a gentleman's carriage ?"

"No, madam, a hack chaise."

"Some trumpery people, then, I'll  
lay

lay my life. I wonder they had the assurance to come to a strange house like this, at such a time of night too! I wonder they had not gone on to Reading."

Miss Leslie then offered to go down herself; and Mrs. Conway, who had more prudence, though perhaps not more feeling than her daughters, determined to follow; and Mr. Conway, desiring to be called when the gentleman returned, shut the door after them, and sat down.

Mr. Thornborough, hearing all that passed, was shocked at the insolence and insensibility the whole family betrayed on this occasion; and felt a strange curiosity to know who the unfortunate travellers were,

were, whose ill stars had brought them to this house : a curiosity in him so unusual, that he could not account for it.

In a few minutes the footman came in again, and said he had been mistaken in supposing the gentleman was gone himself for a physician ; he had only left the room to send on the postillion, who was so much intoxicated he could scarcely fit his horses.

“ Then,” interrupted our hero, “ he must be very unfit to send on so important an occasion :” and determining to offer his own servant, as he did not imagine Mr. Conway intended to notice this intelligence, he closed the music book ; and, with a slight bow to miss

Conway, who looked angrily at the man for again interrupting them, left the room and went down stairs. In crossing the hall, he met a gentleman in mourning; and instantly guessing it was the stranger, he addressed him with his usual politeness:

“I feel, sir, too much concern for the cause which at this hour obliges you to seek an asylum in a strange house, not to take every method in my power to alleviate the distress you are in. Mention only what physician you wish to see, and my servant shall this moment set out for Reading, and not return without him.”

“I thank you, sir,” replied the gentleman;

man; but I fear I have already occasioned much confusion, by intruding in the manner I have done. But I hope the cause will plead my apology : there was no house in sight but yours, therefore I took the liberty."

"Pardon me," interrupted our hero, "this house is not mine; would to Heaven it were, at least for the present! You would not then have waited thus for farther assistance. But I am only an accidental visitor, nor heard I till this moment your distress."

"You are then," replied the other, "particularly kind to interest yourself thus voluntarily in the anxiety of one unknown to you; nor will I disappoint your gene-

rous intention, by refusing the assistance you offer, and will therefore beg you to send for any physician of whose skill you have an opinion, as I am an utter stranger, not only to this part of the country, but to all its inhabitants."

Mr. Thornborough then calling his servant, ordered him instantly to set out for Reading, and return with doctor M——. He then followed the gentleman into the parlour, where the lady was lying on a sofa, apparently without sense; the housekeeper, assisted by miss Leslie, rubbing her temples and hands with vinegar, and Mrs. Conway looking on.

“Is she not yet recovered?” cried he with earnestness.

“Not entirely,” replied miss Leslie: “but do not, sir, be alarmed; Mrs. Lawrence tells me this fit is not so bad as the last, as she has not been entirely gone, and is now, I hope, reviving.”

“Thank Heaven!” exclaimed he, and walked to the other end of the room, to conceal his emotions. Mr. Thornborough followed to persuade him not to give way to such excessive grief: but finding he was incapable of listening to him, he returned to the sofa, and for the first time fixing his eyes on the fair invalid, discovered, in spite of the livid paleness of her complexion, that he had  
never

never seen but glowing with the roses of health, and the blushes of sensibility, and though her eyes were still closed, which ever melted with softness, and sparkled with intelligence, that it was no other than his beloved Sophia Barrymore.

"Yet seem'd her lips ethereal smile the same :

"That dear distinction every doubt remov'd."

He started, half uttered a frantic expression of mingled horror and surprise, which drew on him general attention, and hastily going up to the gentleman, he seized his arm, and in a loud whisper exclaimed, "Just Heaven! is not that miss Barrymore?"

"Yes," replied he, "too surely it is :

H 2

but

but why, fir, do you ask? Do you know her?"

"Do I know her! What a question! Oh, fir, whoever you may be, for I know not, you cannot have a deeper, a warmer interest in her than I have." He spoke now aloud, being entirely off all his guard.

"You may, fir," replied the gentleman, "guess how much I am interested in her recovery, when I tell you I am bound to her by every tie of relationship and friendship, by a long and perfect knowledge of her heart and disposition, and by the truest affection and sincerest regard."

Our

Our hero turned pale at this speech, and feeling every apprehension renewed, "You are then," said he in a faint voice, "Mr. Barrymore, I presume?"

"I am, indeed. And permit me now to ask the favour of your name."

"My name is Thornborough.—Long devoted to your charming cousin, I have been, partly by my own folly, and partly by an unfortunate combination of circumstances, prevented from avowing the sentiments I have entertained; and I now fear they will be avowed too late."

He looked at Mr. Barrymore with an earnestness not to be mistaken, who, instantly guessing his meaning, replied,

H 3

with

with the utmost frankness, "Your apprehensions of me are, I assure you, without foundation ; our regard, though mutual, is merely fraternal : yet I cannot answer for her heart ; I only repeat, you need not fear me."

Our hero returned the warmest thanks for this confidence ; when Mrs. Conway, who had just heard enough to discover they were not unknown to each other, came up ; and Mr. Barrymore walking to the sofa, she addressed Mr. Thornborough—

" Pray, sir, who are these strangers ? You seem to know them, I think."

" Yes, madam, I have that pleasure :  
the

the lady is daughter to the late sir Philip, and the gentleman son to the present sir Charles Barrymore of Delafield."

"What, niece to the earl of S——, who refused lord Hartland?"

"Yes, madam, the same."

"Bless my soul! Who could have supposed that? Betty (calling to the housemaid, who was waiting at the door), let your master know—that is tell him I wish to see him; and desire miss Conway or miss Lucy would come down directly."

Mr. Thornborough, ill able to conceal his indignation, left her to her sur-

prise ; and going to the sofa, had the infinite satisfaction of once more beholding those eyes which had made so deep an impression on his heart. " Thank God !" cried he eagerly and loudly. Sophia, though scarcely yet recovered, looked up on hearing this exclamation ; when, no longer able to restrain himself, he kneeled down by her side, and lifting her hand to his lips, imprinted on it a kiss. She withdrew it immediately. Miss Leslie, who had partly supported her, now perceiving her grow better, lifted her with the housekeeper's assistance, and placed her upright against the arm of the sofa. She again looked at Mr. Thornborough, who stood with his arms crossed, and his eyes mournfully fixed on her pale countenance, and in a low voice

voice said to him, "Why, sir, did you leave Southampton? Why pursue me hither? We had better not have met again." Her voice now faltered, and she was unable to go on, but again leaned her head against miss Leslie.

"This is, indeed, insupportable," cried he, fancying her delirious: then wildly rushing out of the room, Mr. Barrymore followed him, and when he was a little composed, "I am," said he, "as much at a loss as yourself to guess her meaning, unless you saw her at Southampton, during the short time we staid there yesterday."

"I have never been at Southampton," returned our hero; "but, tell me,

H 5

I entreat

I entreat you, from whence you came, and whether you have not seen sir Charles and lady Barrymore since your arrival in England, and what is the cause of Sophia's illness."

"I will tell you every thing, if you will be but calm. Instead of embarking at Calais, having some unexpected business to transact in Normandy on my late uncle's account, we were detained near a fortnight beyond the time fixed on for our return, and then embarked in the Havre packet, landed at Southampton yesterday, where we staid a few hours to rest ourselves, and then proceeded to Winchester, where we slept; and early this morning sent on two of the servants to Delafield to announce our arrival,

arrival, hoping to follow almost immediately. Thomas, my own man, falling down, and hurting his leg, we were obliged to leave him at Winchester, and were consequently left without any attendant. Sophia's unwearied attention to her father, through the course of a long and painful disorder, added to the constant anxiety of her mind, gave her a very severe fit of illness herself; which, though abated, was not entirely conquered: however, I thought her better when we landed, and attributed the amendment to the violent sea-sickness she had suffered; but am now inclined to imagine I judged perfectly wrong, and that it is owing to that she is now so ill. Yet this morning she appeared merely weak and out of spirits, and I

H 6

hoped

hoped the journey would have been serviceable : but at Basingstoke she grew so much worse, we were obliged to stay some time ; but her anxiety to reach Delafield was so great, that the instant she could sit up, she desired to set out again ; and this it was that made us so late. Fearful, I believe, that I should wish her to stay on the road, she concealed her increasing illness till she fainted entirely dead ; and I was so terrified, that I ordered the man to drive directly to this house, which was the only one in sight. Perhaps it was a strange step ; yet, surely, on such an occasion no fellow-creature could refuse their assistance."

" They must be brutes, if they did,"  
exclaimed our hero.

Here

Here their conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Conway, who, with a profusion of compliments and apologies, desired Mr. Barrymore would pardon his not waiting on him before ; but really he did not know who it was that he had the honour of entertaining under his roof ; and begged he would consider his house as if it was his own.

Mr. Barrymore thanked him coolly, for he had been much hurt at his first inattention ; and our hero surveyed him with added contempt and dislike every minute. They continued in the library together for some time, when Mr. Barrymore was summoned to the parlour by the arrival of the physician.

Mr.

Mr. Conway returned to the music-room, and Mr. Thornborough waited to hear doctor M——'s opinion. He had been much easier since Charles Barrymore's relation, not only with respect to her illness, but from being convinced, as she had not yet seen her uncle, she was still in an error with respect to his name, which he thought might in some way, though he could not guess in what, account for her speech.

Mr. Barrymore soon returned with very favourable intelligence. Doctor M—— had pronounced her in no kind of danger, but that her illness arose from fatigue and anxiety, which her delicate frame, so lately agitated, was unable to support. He had ordered her some  
cordial

cordial and composing draughts, and she already appeared more revived, and perfectly calm; and as she was just going to be carried up stairs, Charles had taken leave of her for the night; and our hero, now himself relieved from apprehension, desired Mr. Barrymore would join the company with him.

CHAP.

## C H A P. XI.

IT will here be necessary to revert to what passed from the time of Sophia's leaving Berkeley-square, on the summons from her father. Her uncle and aunt accompanied her as far as Paris, from whence her cousin Charles attended her to the south of France. Sir Philip at this period, though so much emaciated and enfeebled as to leave no hope of his recovery, was yet better than when the express set off. His illness was in great measure owing to the regret he felt for his past conduct: thoughtless as he had ever been before, in the bosom of  
of

of a retirement to which his own folly had condemned him, he had leisure to reflect on the extravagance of his youth; and the sad reverse of his life, to what it had been when immersed in dissipation, hurt his pride as much as it wounded his feelings. Without any object to interest his mind, or any variety to amuse it, his health gradually fell a prey to remorse, remorse heightened by the injustice he had practised, in suffering his daughter to resign her independance, and then wasting it in the same careless manner he had done the rest of his fortune.

In communicating these reflections to Sophia, as one of the principal sources of his unhappiness and illness, it suddenly

denly struck her, that, had she accompanied him abroad, by drawing him into some society, and alleviating his distresses by every method in her power, she might have prolonged a life now evidently falling a sacrifice to dejection and despair, from the loss of all the domestic comforts which alone can render existence desirable. This idea preyed constantly on her mind, and filled it with self-accusations she by no means deserved. Yet, by exertions the most meritorious, as they were often extremely painful, she concealed all her feelings from sir Philip, lest they should add to his sufferings, already too acute; and from this restraint, as well as from the fatigue she underwent when his life drew near a close, her own health was much injured:

and

and when he was released, the consequences were, as might well be expected, a violent nervous fever, which confined her totally for some time; and when she was sufficiently recovered to travel slowly, she was yet far from well, the fever still preying on her spirits, and preventing her from regaining her strength.

Sir Charles and lady Barrymore were returned to England some time before her illness; and, in tenderness to their feelings, she suffered not her cousin to inform them of it, till she was mended,

During their stay at Paris, which was only for a few days, to enable her the better to pursue her journey, she received  
a letter

a letter from sir Charles, to inform her of the death of the honourable Mr. Hartland, her late mother's uncle, who, having an ample fortune and no children, had divided it between his relations; but respecting the extreme generosity of Sophia's conduct, of which he had been told, in addition to what would have been lady Mary's share, he left her six thousand pounds, which added to that, made the whole of her legacy fourteen thousand.

Careless as she usually was of the gifts of fortune, nor anxious for independence, since her dependance was unattended by any mortifying circumstances, yet this bequest afforded a satisfaction, of which at first she scarcely  
knew

knew the source ; but a strict scrutiny soon discovered it. Her partiality to our hero has often been mentioned ; but at the time she believed him engaged to miss Wilding, her prudence and good sense enabled her so entirely to conquer it, that it became no more than a preferable regard, which she fancied his superior merit might well excuse : but on the evening she met him at Mrs. Burlington's, as well as on that preceding which they passed together at the Crown, his attention to her had been so marked, that she knew not what to make of it : but hearing, in a day or two, that it was reported there had been a violent quarrel between them, and that it was supposed to arise from the lady's jealousy, she determined to be on her guard,

guard, and, lest she should unintentionally give miss Wilding uneasiness, if possible, avoid seeing him.

During his absence at this time, the day for their own journey was fixed, and they met no more till on the road, as the reader may remember. The circumstance of the arrest was almost as painful to her, as if it had happened to herself: yet, though she knew not how to believe him innocent, she could not bear to think him guilty of any mean, much less dishonest action. Whilst he was confined in London, and just before the express arrived from her father, she received a letter from Mrs. Burlington, with whom she left a trifling commission, in which was intelligence that surprised, as much as it delighted her.

Mrs.

Mrs. Burlington was a lady of no very uncommon character: though she had not been happily married herself, she was a most strenuous promoter of matrimony among her acquaintance: and if two young people fell in her way, who appeared attached to each other, she zealously forwarded the cause, without ever considering equality of birth or fortune, if they were but in the same line of company. She was, with only this one fault, so good humoured, lively, and entertaining, that her society was universally coveted, and her manners generally admired. To miss Barrymore she had paid so much attention, that she insensibly engaged her regard, and they became extremely intimate.

From

From our hero's first introduction to the Barrymores, Mrs. Burlington insisted upon it he had a preference for Sophia, as she saw incontrovertible marks of it in his countenance and manner ; and, as lively imaginations are as ready to believe what they hope, as heavy and melancholy dispositions are to doubt the success of their wishes, she readily gave some credit to assertions, of which she would gladly have been convinced. Yet a secret monitor in her breast hinted to her the impropriety of indulging hopes, which could not, which ought not to be realized, and she listened to its suggestions : and, when to these was added his avowed preference for miss Wilding, she fancied she had obtained a complete victory over herself : yet many lit-

the circumstances occurred occasionally to revive her partiality, to which Mrs. Burlington's letter, which I shall transcribe, very much contributed.

TO MISS BARRYMORE.

I Hope, my dear Sophia, the packet, which I sent by the coach this morning, will reach you in safety : but though the ostensible reason of my letter is to inform you when you may expect it, I have far more important intelligence to communicate ; intelligence which, unless I am much deceived, will put your dear little heart in a flutter. In short, my dear girl, that sweet fellow Godfrey is at length at liberty ; and, I doubt not, in a

few days will throw himself, and would I could add his fortune, at your feet. But what signifies fortune? and what signifies a little contradiction? Hang all old stiff uncles and aunts, I say, and follow your own inclinations. But I believe you have more prudence than I have now, or ever had; and, after all, I believe that's best; for I am sure I suffered enough for my elopement. Well, but no more of that now; you are, I dare say, anxious to know particulars, and for once I will indulge you. Thornborough and Godfrey are both gone off, and the Wildings have been shut up, all but Charlotte; who, they say, has refused Thornborough; but that old Wilding refused Letitia to Godfrey, not choosing she should marry a young man without fortune.

fortune. But hang me if I believe there's any truth in this, for every body knew the handsome lieutenant had nothing but his commission long ago; and it is whispered, that he and Letitia had a high quarrel, and that your superior beauty and charms were the causes of his leaving her; not, however, dishonourably, so you need have no scruple on that account; but that she rejected him from perceiving his attachment to you. Indeed, that he has been long attached, I am very well convinced; and so I hope you will be too. Make what use you please of this intelligence, from, my dear Sophy, your ever faithful

HARRIET BURLINGTON.

Sophia was scarcely conscious of the effect this intelligence had on her mind: but her summons to sir Philip not only banished that, but every other idea, except what arose from her anxiety on his account; and it occurred not again till she heard of her uncle Hartland's legacy. Then, with the consciousness of independence, returned the recollection of our hero; and dwelling with pleasure on a hope which not merely animated her, but served to banish the unpleasant sensations which of late had wholly occupied her heart, she reconsidered Mrs. Burlington's opinion, and recalled all those instances of his behaviour which induced her to believe it was well founded. Sometimes, in contradiction to these hopes, arose the fear of his not deserving her

her approbation : many circumstances had unfortunately combined to impress this apprehension ; and after balancing in her mind the various lights in which he had appeared, she at length determined to judge by his future conduct ; and that, if he could clear himself with honour from the aspersions of inconstancy to miss Wilding, and extravagance, which his arrest upon the road seemed too clearly to prove ; and were she convinced of the reality of his attachment to her, and that his moral character was what she hoped to find it, she would, without paying any attention to the approbation of the world, if she could obtain that of her own friends, nobly and generously bestow upon him her hand and fortune.

Indulging these romantic and soothing ideas, she embarked at Havre ; but the extreme sickness she suffered during her passage again shook her extremely : but her spirits were so high from the regulation of her plan, that Mr. Barrymore, judging only by them, fancied her perfectly recovered, when on their landing she lost the disorder, which was only occasioned by the roughness of the waves.

## C H A P. XII.

IT happened at this very time that Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey were at Southampton, in their way to Portsmouth, from whence they were to embark; and Godfrey being absent on regimental business, his lady was alone at the Dolphin inn, sitting at a bow window, when she observed a gentleman and lady in deep mourning walking up the street, followed by servants and sailors with trunks and hat-boxes, as if just come off the water. The slow pace and pale countenance of the lady attracted her particular attention; and as they drew nearer she

discovered it was miss Barrymore ; but the gentleman was a stranger. They came in at the gateway, and soon after she saw her in the next bow window ; when it instantly struck her, that she had now an opportunity to revenge herself on Sophia for all her misfortunes, which she believed originated solely from her. Letitia was so vain of her own attractions, that she imagined Mr. Thornborough's attachment to her would have counteracted his anger at the duplicity of her conduct, had he not, by Sophia's allurements, been first drawn from her : and this opinion his letter in some measure confirmed, as he there confessed he had long been weary of his chains. She knew miss Barrymore had been abroad ; and her appearance inducing her to believe

lieve she was but just returned, she thought it probable she might not yet have heard the reasons of Mr. Thornborough's leaving her, as none of her particular friends were at B—— when it was first known and talked off; and she resolved to send a message to miss Barrymore, desiring leave to wait on her for half an hour, and then be determined how to proceed, by finding out whether she was acquainted with the truth or not.

A few minutes after she saw Mr. Barrymore cross the street; and, directly ringing the bell, ordered the waiter to enquire if the stranger's name was Barrymore; and if it was, to acquaint her

that an old friend was in the house, who wished much to see her, and, if agreeable, would wait on her for a few minutes. Sophia, though much perplexed to guess who it could be, returned her compliments, and should be glad of her company immediately : but how was she surprised and disappointed, when the lady, who had assumed the title of an old friend, proved to be no other than (as she believed) miss Wilding, with whom she had nothing more than a common acquaintance ! However, her natural good humour, and the pleasure we all feel at meeting in a strange place a person whom we have ever seen before, induced her to receive Letitia, not only with politeness but cordiality.

After a few usual compliments, Mrs. Godfrey made some enquiries into Sophia's present situation, which leading to a conversation on some past events, soon informed her of all she wished to know; and, in return, said, with a smile, "It would be unfair to make you confess every thing, and say nothing myself; but in fact my own situation is altered since last we met, and I am now upon my journey to Portsmouth, to join the regiment to which my husband belongs."

"The regiment!" replied miss Barrymore, in a voice that expressed more apprehension than astonishment: "may I ask who it is that you have honoured with your hand?"

"Oh, certainly you may," answered she, with an affected smile; "it is the Mr. Godfrey whom you knew at B—."

"Mr. Godfrey! Good heavens! I am extremely—that is, I wish—I hope you will enjoy all possible happiness: but I am really so much—so surprised, to hear it; for I had been told a misunderstanding had taken place, and——"

"Yes," interrupted Mrs. Godfrey, delighted to see her confusion, which however she appeared not to notice; 'there was a slight mistake; but lovers' quarrels, you know, miss Barrymore.—He did leave B—— with his friend, whom Charlotte absolutely refused, being then positively engaged to Mr. Littleton: but

he returned in a short time; and having taken much pains to persuade me my jealousy was ill founded, I could not resist his solicitations, though scarcely convinced of the truth of his assertions."

Miss Barrymore sat for a few minutes totally lost in thought; then, fearing to excite the suspicions of Mrs. Godfrey, she looked up, and enquired where the regiment was going.

"To the West-Indies: but, my dear miss Barrymore, you look extremely pale; are you ill?"

"Not particularly ill at present," replied she, exerting herself; "but I have been

been dangerously so ; and the fatigues of the voyage have been almost too much for me."

Though she had already succeeded too well, the malignant spirit of Letitia was not yet satisfied with tormenting; but thus continued—" Ah ! that is what my dear Mr. Godfrey is afraid of for me : and when he found he could not prevail on me to stay behind, (for how could I leave him ?) he would have sold or exchanged his commission : but that I could not suffer, for his honour is dearer to me than even my own happiness : nor shall I, blessed with his presence, regret the loss of friends, or the change of climate. Should you, madam ?"

" No,

“No, certainly I ought not,” returned Sophia, in a faint voice. “Were I deeply attached, as I must be to the man I called my husband, I could follow him to any part of the world.”

“And do you not think Mr. Godfrey worthy such an attachment?”

“Yes, indeed I do,” said Sophia, affecting to speak with indifference, but succeeding very ill. Then suddenly rising, no longer able to support a conversation so extremely painful to her, she rang the bell, enquired if Mr. Barrymore was returned, and desired the carriages might be got ready.

“The gentleman is not come back,  
madam,”

madam," said the waiter; "but the horses are putting to, and will be ready in an instant."

"What!" cried Mrs. Godfrey, "are you going? Will you not stay to see Mr. Godfrey? I expect him every minute."

"We must set off the moment my cousin returns," replied she coldly; and, determined now not to wait any longer, desired the chocolate she had ordered might be brought up immediately; and the ladies each taking a dish, it for some time put a stop to their conversation; and before they could resume it, Mr. Barrymore returned.

"I have,"

“I have,” said he, as he entered the room, “delivered the letters, and am now at your devotion.” Then bowing to Mrs. Godfrey, he apologized for his inattention. Sophia’s anxiety and terror increasing every moment, she would not let him sit down, but desired he would order the carriage to draw up: then civilly taking leave of Mrs. Godfrey, she hastened down stairs; but her strength almost failing, she was assisted in getting into the chaise; and, when seated, she drew up all the glasses, pretending she was cold, but in reality to avoid being seen; whilst, by fixing her eyes on a book she had with her, she avoided seeing any object that might have distressed or pained her, till they were in the open road: but then, no longer  
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able

able to refuse her cousin's entreaties, she took some notice of the really beautiful prospects, though fearful of encountering a fight, for which all the variety of wood, water, and villas, however delightful, could ill recompense her.

She arrived, however, safely at Winchester, without having her feelings wounded by the appearance of a man it was her duty to forget : but every hope of happiness was now at an end, and all those gay, but delusive visions she had suffered herself to indulge, totally destroyed. The most romantic imagination could not have believed a mistake possible. She had seen Mrs. Godfrey ; had heard her relate the cause of their separation and reconciliation, which  
 agreed

agreed exactly with what she had before been informed of. Yet, deeply as she lamented the loss of an illusion which had soothed many heavy hours, she had strength of mind to rejoice that an éclaircissement had taken place, before it was too late for her own peace ; as she did not doubt but the same exertions, which had formerly enabled her to conquer a hopeless passion, would now be equally successful ; and resolving not at first to give way to the weakness of a regret as fruitless as improper, she rallied her spirits, and kept up a constant and tolerably cheerful conversation with her cousin : but her frame had been previously so shaken by anxiety and illness, that she was unequal to the struggle ; yet, hoping to reach Delafield, and in the bosom

from of her kind maternal friend repose all her sorrows, she concealed her increasing fatigue, till her fainting away alarmed Mr. Barrymore, who instantly ordered the postillion to drive to Conway House.

Sophia was lifted, insensible as she was, into the parlour; and after some time, by the attention of the servants (the only part of the family they had yet seen), was restored to life: but she recovered only to relapse again; and when she opened her eyes the second time, the first object which struck them was our hero. In spite of all her resolutions to forget him, she had retained, during the whole time of her journey from Southampton, an idea which she attempted in

vain

vain to banish; and this was, that he had married miss Wilding more from a point of honour than any real affection: nor, though in every other respect perfectly free from vanity, could she divest herself of a belief, that he had been fondly attached to herself. Fully impressed by this imagination, when she saw him standing by her side, and deeply affected at her situation, it was no wonder she believed he had followed her from Southampton; and, scarcely sensible of what she meant to say, she spoke what appeared so unintelligible to all the by-standers, and particularly to her cousin.

When he had left the room, she again looked up; and not seeing him, began to imagine it was an illusion of her fancy,  
which

which she was conscious had dwelt on his image the whole day : and this opinion was confirmed, when, as she grew better, and the physician had left her, she asked miss Leslie, who quitted her not a moment, if there was any gentleman in the house of the name of Godfrey : to which that young lady replied in the negative ; and this so extremely perplexed her, that, notwithstanding her extreme weakness and fatigue, it would probably have prevented her from sleeping, had not the draughts, ordered her by doctor M——, counteracted the wildness of her imagination, and given her a refreshing slumber, and a quiet night.

## C H A P. XIII.

WHEN our hero entered the drawing-room, he introduced Mr. Barrymore, who was very politely received by the whole party, and a profusion of compliments and lamentations poured out from all quarters, on the lady's illness, and as many hopes for her recovery. The concert was now at an end, and a summons to supper immediately followed. When they were seated at table, Mr. Conway enquired for miss Leslie; and on sending a message up stairs, she requested they would excuse her attendance,

tendance, as she wished to remain with miss Barrymore. Mr. Thornborough was delighted at this proof of humanity and kindness, as she was the only one of the ladies, either belonging to, or visiting the family, who had paid her the least attention; though, to use their own words, they had been immensely shocked, deeply concerned, and extremely uneasy.

Mr. Conway's amazing sorrow for miss Leslie's absence, first gave our hero reason to believe that she was a young woman of consequence; for he had hitherto seen so little real fine feeling in high life, though it is constantly affected, that he supposed she was either an humble companion, or daughter to some poor  
cu-

curate : but on making a slight enquiry respecting her to Mr. Trefilian, by whom he had voluntarily seated himself, that gentleman replied, she was the only daughter of a baronet of large fortune in the north of England.

“ Then, by what accident,” returned our hero, “ is she thrown amongst these insensibles ?” looking round him.

“ By the love of company and amusement. As an only girl, she has been indulged to a fault : but indulgence has not spoiled her disposition, which is one of the best in the world ; and her tenderness equals it. She came down to Conway House with the hope of assisting in the theatrical performance ; but, though

deeply disappointed when it was given up, she did all in her power to restore miss Conway's good humour, and prevent her from repining."

"An arduous task, I should guess."

"Yes, faith; an almost impracticable one, I assure you."

Here they were interrupted by a loud scream from one of the young ladies, who was frightened by a dog's jumping up in her lap, where, however, he staid not an instant, only taking it in his way to Mr. Barrymore, upon whom he bestowed every expression of affection. In the general confusion this poor animal had been forgotten, and the servants had  
shut

shut him out of the house; but entering the first opportunity he could find, he made his way to the parlour, where, in his eagerness to seek his old master, he paid no respect to female delicacy.

Miss Clementina Molesworth, for it was her, soon however recovered her transient alarm, and began caressing the dog herself. It was a really beautiful spaniel, with a white breast, and its back and head spotted with black. Addressing Mr. Barrymore, "Pray, sir," said she, "what is its name?"

"Bran, madam."

"Bran! La, what an odd name! Why, you might as well have called him

flour, I think," returned she with a loud laugh.

"Aye," cried Mr. Trefilian drily, "or pollard, or barley meal, would either of them have been much genteeler names, and convey an equal meaning. Do you not think so?"

"Ah, now you are laughing at me. But, pray, sir, why was he called by so foolish a name?"

He had been so named by Sophia, in her very young and romantic days, from his white bosom, after the white-breasted Bran, the dog of Fillan, son of Fingal, mentioned in the poems of Ossian, of which she was particularly fond: and

Mr. Barrymore, in reply to miss Clementina's question, informed her of the reason in as concise terms as possible.

"Oh!" interrupted Mr. Manningford, who was just setting up for one of the literati; "from the poems of Ossian. Ah! they are charming things; upon my word, an elegant idea indeed, an elegant idea."

"It was a lady's fancy," said Mr. Barrymore.

"Suppose, Mr. Manningford," cried Mr. Trefilian, "you were to explain to miss Clementina a little of the story, for she does not seem clearly to understand it; and as these poems are your imme-

diate study, you must be better informed than any other person in company."

"Why," replied he, "I do not know particulars myself, for I have only just looked over it hastily. I only recollect, that when Fingal, king of *Scotland*, went over to *Dublin*, to assist the Irish king, whose name I have forgotten, his youngest son was killed in battle; and his dog Bran, though left in *Edinburgh*, made such a howling, that the *queen* and *princesses* knew he was dead, before the *express* could arrive."

"Bravo!" cried Mr. Trefilian: "why, much as I did expect from you, this account has exceeded all I could have imagined."

Mr.

Mr. Barrymore with difficulty suppressed a laugh; and our hero could scarcely conceal his surprise. "I beg your pardon," said he, with a smile; "but there is one circumstance you are, I believe, a little mistaken in. Bran was not left in *Edinburgh*, but attended his master, and was found in a cave guarding his body."

"Ah, well, there is not much difference," replied he.

"Now I think," cried Mr. Conway, "the story was better as Mr. Manningford related it; because it agrees so well with the superstitious ideas of the Scottish nation."

“Well,” said Mr. Daventry, “I am like the great Johnson; I cannot admire those poems.”

“And there, I believe,” whispered our hero to his neighbour, “the resemblance ends. What a strange thing it is,” added he, “that shallow people are so apt to fancy a resemblance to any remarkable character, though only in their faults, gives them a distinction!”

“It is,” answered Mr. Trefilian, “the same kind of vanity that tempts plain women to appear in a singular fashion, though ever so unbecoming, because the duchess of R—— or lady L—— must look divinely, let them dress as they please.”

“I think,

“ I think, fir,” said a Mr. Abernethie, addressing himself to Mr. Daventry, “ you should allow for doctor Johnson’s prejudice to the Scots in general ; which if I were to say was illiberal and unjust, it would appear like a national partiality, which, in the present instance, I wish to avoid ; as I can declare, though he was no friend to my country, I admire his genius and talents, as much as I respect his morality and virtue, and am ever of opinion his writings must have the best effect on both. But doctor Johnson was neither candid nor liberal in his judgments, as many of his criticisms evidently prove ; and with respect to the poems of Ossian, I am inclined to believe he never gave them a fair perusal.”

"Mr. Manningford," said miss Lucy Conway, "I love verses extremely : you shall lend them to me."

"I fear, madam," said Mr. Abernethie gravely, and with some surprise, "you will be disappointed ; they are not *verses*."

"Not verses ! What are they then, pray, sir ?"

"Upon my word," returned he, "I do not know how to make you comprehend what I mean—"

"Why," interrupted Mr. Daventry, contemptuously, "they are 'prose run mad.'"

"Ah, well, I am satisfied," cried she; "I do not want to read them."

Mr. Abernethie now appeared so disgusted with Mr. Daventry, that he made a very keen reply; which our hero observing, and fearing their argument might end in a dispute, he turned the conversation to doctor Johnson's letters, published by Mrs. Piozzi; and this being a subject most of them could expatiate upon, it soon became general, and continued till they parted for the night.

## C H A P. XIV.

THE next morning, Mr. Thornborough hearing miss Barrymore was much better, and had passed a quiet night, sent to request Mr. Barrymore's company for half an hour in the garden ; and there in the fullest manner explained to him, not merely his present situation, but what it had been when first he knew Sophia, and the mistake in which she probably yet remained, which he entreated him to clear up, when she was well enough to listen to him.

Mr.

Mr. Barrymore heard with equal pleasure and surprise this full and candid avowal of our hero's sentiments; and promised, the instant it was in his power, he would fulfil all he required. Soon after they were summoned to breakfast, during which Mr. Thornborough paid every possible attention to miss Leslie, whose tenderness to Sophia nothing could obliterate from his mind; and she now spoke of her in such animated and affectionate terms, that he was particularly pleased. He found her, as Mr. Trefilian had described, wild, volatile, artless and good-humoured; with a quick understanding, but wholly uncultivated, and a general carelessness of manner, that appeared wholly inconsistent with her assiduity to Sophia.

When

When the breakfast was at an end, the company separated, and Mr. Thornborough having before resolved to return home to dinner, was distressed how to act : he knew not how to go, without seeing or hearing more of miss Barrymore ; yet could not alter his resolution, without appearing whimsical, or declaring his motive for staying : and still undetermined, he walked into the library, where taking a book, he sat down, not to read, but contemplate, whilst Mr. Barrymore receiving a summons from his fair cousin, who was now risen, waited on her in her own apartment. He was delighted to see her so much better than she was the preceding evening ; but there was still a deep dejection in her manner, for which he could  
not

not account. When he congratulated her on her visible amendment, she shook her head, and said she had been much worse than he supposed, for that her senses had not returned, when she apparently recovered.

“Would you believe it,” added she with a deep blush, yet not imagining he could guess any thing from what she meant to say, “that my mind was so deranged, I fancied I saw and spoke to a person who I since find has not been in the house, and indeed is, I doubt not, many miles from hence, as I know he was at Southampton when I left it?”

“Was it anyone you saw there?” asked Mr. Barrymore.

“No,”

“No,” replied she; “but I saw his lady, and we talked of him.”

*any Uncle*  
 “Then, my dear Sophy, there was no mistake at all. The gentleman you knew as Mr. Godfrey is now in this house, and was present when you recovered from your fainting. You spoke to him, I recollect, by the name of Godfrey, which surprised every body, as his real name is Thornborough, by which he had introduced himself to me some time before.”

“You must mean his friend,” replied she, confused and astonished.

“No, I do not indeed. I see you are perplexed; but if you are well enough  
 to

to listen to me, I will solve this mystery at once."

She entreated he would, and assured him she was not merely well enough to listen, but that it would relieve her mind beyond credibility, to be convinced the person she had seen and Mr. Godfrey were not the same. She attended to his recital with various sensations of delight and astonishment; but as it required not all the penetration he was master of, to discover the sentiments which she vainly attempted to conceal, he merely related the facts as they were, without speaking of his attachment to her, concluding this would be quite as much as her spirits could at present support: and observing she was still too weak for farther

ther conversation, soon after he had finished his narrative, he took leave.

On the stairs he met our hero, who anxiously enquired if he had fulfilled his promise; and then begged to know if she was sufficiently recovered to see him.

“No,” replied Mr. Barrymore, “not with my consent to-day: she is too much agitated with what I have been saying, and——”

“Have you then,” interrupted our hero, “told her how much, how deeply I am interested in all——”

“No indeed, I left that to you. But hear my plan: she is extremely  
anxious

anxious to reach Delafield; and unless she should grow worse, I intend sending for a carriage from Reading, and setting out this afternoon; so few miles, if we drive slow, cannot I think hurt her."

"Now," cried our hero, "hear mine: "since I have no chance of seeing miss Barrymore, I have not a single inducement to remain here. I will take leave and set off instantly, and send my carriage to attend you to Delafield. My horses are remarkably quiet; and in every respect, I think, it will be better than a hired one. You will not, I hope, refuse me this trifling favour."

"No

“No indeed; on the contrary, I shall be very much obliged to you.”

“Well then, farewell for the present: to-morrow I shall take the liberty of calling at Delafield.” He then hastily shook his hand, and ordering his horse, entered the room where the family were assembled. They were much surprised and vexed at his sudden determination, as in the morning they had formed hopes of his staying till the next. But nothing had now the power of altering his resolution; and after requesting it might not be long before he had the pleasure of seeing them all at the Abbey, he turned to Mr. Trefilian, and enquired if he never rode that way in a morning, and begging he would favour him

him with his company, whenever he could, which that gentleman readily promised, he took leave, and arriving at home, sent off his carriage instantly, and then strolling down to the parsonage, he related to anxious and interested friends all which had passed the preceding day.

When the chariot returned, the servant brought him a note from Charles Barrymore, informing him that Sophia was still mending, and had borne her little journey better than he expected; that he found the family had been in great alarm on their account; and that Mr Charles and lady Barrymore arrived at Delafield in half an hour after them, having only the day before received the  
letter

• letter which he had written from Paris, to acquaint them of the alteration of their route.

Mr. Thornborough was much delighted with this intelligence, and on the following morning went himself to Delafield, where he was received with extreme cordiality and pleasure by sir Charles and his lady; and whilst they were chatting over past events, Mr. Barrymore returned from a ride through the grounds, and united his entreaties with theirs, that he would stay dinner. He wanted little persuasion, particularly when, as an inducement, he was told he should see Sophia in the afternoon.

Nothing

Nothing particular passed in this interview; but they observed with mutual satisfaction the pleasure each seemed to receive from this meeting; and in the next, when he was so happy as to find her alone, he made a full declaration of the sentiments he had long entertained, and which a variety of unfortunate events had hitherto obliged him to conceal. She heard him with attention, answered him with frankness, and allowed him to hope for her favour.

As Mr. Thornborough was his own master, and her friends were all solicitous for their union, from believing it would secure the happiness of both; as they were, and had long been, sincerely attached to each other, no obstacle

stacle in the common course of events could arise to disturb their felicity, or prevent the completion of their hopes.

Whilst the necessary preparations were making, our hero almost lived at Delafield, and every day saw new instances of Sophia's merit, virtue, and unequalled sweetness of disposition; whilst his spirit, benevolence, liberality, and good sense, became more obvious to her, as well as to all who knew him. When the tedious formalities of the law were gone through, our hero and his beloved Sophia were united: the ceremony was performed by Mr. Littleton, in the presence of his lady, the Fitzwilliams and Barrymores.

What

What more remains there to say, except that a growing attachment was observed with pleasure by each family, between Charles Barrymore and Caroline Fitzwilliam—that Wentworth Conway having entirely conquered his unworthy passion, passed the greatest part of his time in Berkshire, for the pleasure of being near his friend, who, added to all his domestic happiness, had the satisfaction of hearing Mr. Fleming was reconciled to his uncle, and of witnessing the comfort which the Harfords possessed, and which they always acknowledged was entirely owing to him.

A constant and friendly intercourse is kept up between the families at Delafield, Thornborough Abbey, Beech

Park, and the Parsonage; and living with rational hospitality, and in cheerful elegance, our hero and his lady are no less beloved and esteemed by the whole circle of their acquaintance, than they are adored by the poor, who daily receive the marks of their liberality.

And thus happy in himself, in his friends, and his general society; and peculiarly blest in the possession of a woman whose soul is congenial to his own; he remembers with equal joy and gratitude the hour in which he first quitted Thornborough Abbey, and set out on the romantic design of travelling through the world as a Benevolent Quixote.

F I N I S.